

Allegories in Megillat [Esther](esther.html)

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In this [study](study.html) I would like to look at the cast of characters in Megillat [Esther](esther.html), as they appear in [remez](remez.html), in allegory. This poignant story has a distinct pathos that can only be appreciated when we can see the characters in their allegorical role in history. I believe that this is the way that Chazal, our Sages, intended us to look at the Megillah of [Esther](esther.html). The [Talmud](orallaw.html) asks questions that use the word “allusion”, several times in regards to the characters of the Megillah. Here are some examples of this Talmudic allegory:

***Chullin 139b*** *Where is* [*Haman*](esther.html) *indicated in the Torah? — In the verse: Is it [hamin] from the tree?[[1]](#footnote-1) Where is* [*Esther*](esther.html) *indicated in the Torah? — [In the verse,] And I will surely hide [asthir] my* [*face*](body.html)*.[[2]](#footnote-2) Where is Mordecai indicated in the Torah? — In the verse: Flowing myrrh,[[3]](#footnote-3) which the Targum renders as mira dakia.[[4]](#footnote-4)*

## [HaShem](hashem.html) vs. Achashverosh

Megillat [Esther](esther.html) opens with a focus on Achashverosh, the king:

[***Esther***](esther.html) ***1:1*** *Now it came to pass in the days of Achashverosh, (this [is] Achashverosh which reigned, from India even unto Ethiopia, [over] an hundred and* [*seven*](seven.html) *and* [*twenty*](twenty.html) *provinces:)*

“Now it came to pass”, is the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word: *vayehi*. Our Sages tell us that whenever we see this phrase, it means that trouble is [coming](coming.html). Megillat [Esther](esther.html) opens with an allusion to a troubled [time](time.html).

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah -*** [***Esther***](esther.html) ***Prologue 11*** *R. Tanhuma, R. Berekiah and R. Hiyya Rabbah in the* [*name*](name.html) *of R. Eleazer explained: This rule of exegesis has been transmitted to us from the Captivity, that wherever Scripture uses the expression wayyehi (and it came to pass), it presages trouble. R. Samuel b. Nahman, however, in the* [*name*](name.html) *of R. Jonathan stated: This rule of exegesis has been transmitted to us from the Captivity, that wherever Scripture uses the expression: And it came to pass in the days of, it presages trouble.*

(As an aside: The term “[midrash](orallaw.html)“ is derived from the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word “[Drash](remez.html)”, which means “to delve into”.)

Chazal [teach](teacher.html) that the days of Achashverosh were/are the days of tribulation:

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah -*** [***Esther***](esther.html) ***II:2*** *MANY DAYS (I, 4). They were days of tribulation…*

This [time](time.html) of tribulation alludes to the days of tribulation in the [end of days](lastdays.html):

***Devarim (Deuteronomy) 4:30-31*** *When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, [even] in the latter days, if thou turn to* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his* [*voice*](voice.html)*; (For* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *thy God [is] a merciful God;) he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the* [*covenant*](covenant.html) *of thy* [*fathers*](fathers.html) *which he swore unto them.*

The feast that king Achashverosh gave, alludes to the feast in the [time](time.html) to come:

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah -*** [***Esther***](esther.html) ***II:5*** *AND WHEN THESE DAYS WERE FULFILLED. The word UBIMLOTH (AND WHEN... WERE FULFILLED) is written plene. THE KING MADE A FEAST UNTO ALL THE PEOPLE THAT WERE PRESENT.* [*SEVEN*](seven.html) *DAYS. Rab and Samuel joined issue here* [*One*](one.html) *said: It means* [*seven*](seven.html) *besides the hundred and eighty, whereas Samuel said: It means* [*seven*](seven.html) *included in the hundred and eighty. R. Simon said: Shushan the castle on that occasion was like a great feasting-place where* [*food*](food.html) *and drink were in abundance. R. Hanina b. Papa said: The notables of the* [*time*](time.html) *had been there but they fled. R. Hanina b. Atel said:* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html) *participated in that feast. Said that* [*wicked*](wicked.html) *man [Achashverosh] to them: ‘ Can your God do more for you than this?’ They answered: ‘ “Eye hath not seen, O God, beside Thee, what He shall do for him that waits for Him” (Isaiah 64:3). If he provides for us nothing better than this feast [in the* [*time*](time.html) *to come], we could say to him, “We have already enjoyed the like of this at the table of Achashverosh.”‘*

King Achashverosh allowed every man his [desire](needs.html) when it came to wine:

[***Esther***](esther.html) ***1:8*** *And the drinking [was] according to the* [*law*](law.html)*; none did compel: for so the king had* [*appointed*](settimes.html) *to all the officers of his house, that they should do according to every man’s pleasure.*

This alludes to [HaShem](hashem.html) who gives every man the free will to choose:

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah -*** [***Esther***](esther.html) ***II:14*** *THAT THEY SHOULD DO ACCORDING TO EVERY MAN’S PLEASURE. Said the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, to him: ‘I cannot satisfy all My creatures, and do you seek to do according to every man’s pleasure? It often happens that* [*two*](two.html) *men seek the* [*hand*](fourteen.html) *of the same woman. Can she marry both of them? It must be either* [*one*](one.html) *or the other. So* [*two*](two.html) *ships will lie in a harbor,* [*one*](one.html) *waiting for a north wind, the other for a south. Can the same wind carry them both together? It must be either* [*one*](one.html) *or the other. Tomorrow* [*two*](two.html) *men will appear before you in a suit, a* [*Jewish*](gen-jew.html) *man and a man who is an adversary and an enemy. Can you satisfy both of them? You will have to exalt the* [*one*](one.html) *and hang the other.’ R. Huna said in the* [*name*](name.html) *of R.* [*Benjamin*](benyamin.html) *b. Levi: In this* [*world*](worlds.html) *when the north wind blows the south wind does not blow, and when the south wind blows the north wind does not blow. But in the Messianic* [*future*](future.html)*, at the gathering of the* [*exiles*](galuyot.html)*, God has said, ‘I will bring a strong clearing wind into the* [*world*](worlds.html) *in which both winds are combined’; and so it says, I will say to the north: Give up, and to the south: Keep not back, bring My sons from far, and My daughters from the end of the earth (Isaiah 43:6). Who is it that fulfills the* [*desires*](needs.html) *of them that* [*fear*](fear.html) *Him? It is the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed by He, of whom it is written, He will fulfill the* [*desire*](needs.html) *of them that* [*fear*](fear.html) *Him; He will also hear their* [*cry*](mashal.html)*, and will* [*save*](salvation.html) *them (Ps. CXLV, 19),*

King Achashverosh attempt to succeed in using the [Temple](temple.html) implements where Belshatzar had failed. This Persian [dream](dreams.html) of succeeding where others failed will recur at the great trial at the [end of days](lastdays.html), as described by our Sages:

[***Avodah Zarah***](idolatry.html) ***2b*** *R. Hanina b. Papa — some say R. Simlai — expounded [the foregoing verse] thus: In times to come, the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, will take a scroll of the* [*Law*](law.html) *in His embrace and proclaim: ‘Let him who has occupied himself herewith, come and take his reward.’ Thereupon all the* [*nations*](nations.html) *will crowd together in confusion, as it is said: All the* [*nations*](nations.html) *are* [*gathered*](gather.html) *together, etc. The Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, will then say to them: ‘Come not before Me in confusion, but let each* [*nation*](nations.html) *come in with its scribes;’ as it is said, and let the peoples be* [*gathered*](gather.html) *together,’ and the word le’om [used here] means a kingdom, as it is written, and* [*one*](one.html) *kingdom [u-leom] shall be stronger than the other kingdom. (But can there be confusion in the presence of the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He? — [No;] it is only that they be not confused, and so hear what He says to them.) Thereupon the Kingdom of* [*Edom*](edom.html) *will enter* [*first*](one.html) *before Him. (Why* [*first*](one.html)*? Because they are the most important. Whence do we* [*know*](daat.html) *they are so important? — Because it is written: And he shall devour the whole earth and shall tread it down and break it in pieces; and R. Johanan says that this refers to Rome, whose power is* [*known*](daat.html) *to the whole* [*world*](worlds.html)*. And whence do we* [*know*](daat.html) *that the most important comes forward* [*first*](one.html)*? — Because R. Hisda said: When a king and a* [*community*](community.html) *appear before the [Heavenly] tribunal, the king enters* [*first*](one.html)*, as it is said: That He maintain the cause of His servant [King Solomon] and [then] the cause of His people Israel. And why is it so? — You may say, because it is not the way of the* [*world*](worlds.html) *that a king shall wait without; or you may say [in order that the king shall plead] before the anger [of the Judge] is roused.) The Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, will then say to them: ‘Wherewith have you occupied yourselves?’ They will reply: ‘O Lord of the Universe, we have established many market-places, we have erected many baths, we have accumulated much gold and silver, and all this we did only for the sake of Israel, that they might [have leisure] for occupying themselves with the* [*study*](study.html) *of the Torah.’ The Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, will say in reply: ‘You foolish ones among peoples, all that which you have done, you have only done to satisfy your own* [*desires*](needs.html)*. You have established marketplaces to place courtesans therein; baths, to revel in them; [as to the distribution of] silver and gold, that is mine, as it is written: Mine is the silver and Mine is the gold, saith the Lord of Hosts; are there any among you who have been declaring this?’ And ‘this’ is nought else than the Torah, as it is said: And this is the* [*Law*](law.html) *which Moses set before the children of Israel. They will then depart crushed in spirit. On the departure of the Kingdom of Rome, Persia will step forth. (Why Persia next? — Because they are next in importance. And how do we* [*know*](daat.html) *this? — Because it is written: And behold another beast, a second like to a bear; and R.* [*Joseph*](joseph.html) *learned that this refers to the Persians, who* [*eat*](eating.html) *and drink greedily like the bear, are fleshly like the bear, have shaggy* [*hair*](hair.html) *like the bear, and are restless like the bear.) The Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, will ask of them: ‘Wherewith have ye occupied yourselves?’; and they will reply ‘Sovereign of the Universe, we have built many bridges, we have captured many cities, we have waged many wars, and all this for the sake of Israel, that they might engage in the* [*study*](study.html) *of the Torah. Then the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, will say to them: ‘You foolish ones among peoples, you have built bridges in order to extract toll, you have subdued cities, so as to impose forced labour; as to waging war, I am the Lord of battles, as it is said: The Lord is a man of war; are there any amongst you who have been declaring this?’ and ‘this’ means nought else than the Torah, as it is said: And this is the* [*Law*](law.html) *which Moses set before the Children of Israel . They, too’ will then depart crushed in spirit. (But why should the Persians, having seen that the Romans achieved nought, step forward at all? — They will say to themselves: ‘The Romans have destroyed the* [*Temple*](temple.html)*, whereas we have built it.’) And so will every* [*nation*](nations.html) *fare in turn. (But why should the other* [*nations*](nations.html) *come forth, seeing that those who preceded them had achieved nought? They will say to themselves: The others have oppressed Israel, but we have not. And why are these [*[*two*](two.html)*]* [*nations*](nations.html) *singled out as important, and not the others? — Because their reign will last till the* [*coming*](coming.html) *of the* [*Messiah*](mashiach.html)*.)*

Analyzing the power of Achashverosh, a self-made monarch who succeeded Koresh (Cyrus) as the second of the [three](three.html) Persian rulers (Koresh and Darius the Persian are the other [two](two.html)) of a mighty kingdom, is indispensable to understanding the Megillah. It was his absolute control over the entire inhabited [world](worlds.html) that made the threat of [Haman](esther.html)’s genocide so menacing.

Achashverosh plays [two](two.html) different roles in the Megillah of [Esther](esther.html), according to Chazal, our Sages. In the [first](one.html) role, as King Achashverosh, he is an evil, anti-Semitic, ruler who portrays a false god.

In the second role, as “The King”, on the mystical level, alludes to [HaShem](hashem.html), the King of the [World](worlds.html). The [Midrash](orallaw.html) reads the [name](name.html) Achashverosh as an acronym for *acharit veraishit shelo*, alluding to the [One](one.html) Whom “the end and beginning are His.”

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah -*** [***Esther***](esther.html) ***III:15*** *THEREFORE WAS THE KING VERY WROTH, AND HIS ANGER BURNED IN HIM. R. Johanan said: At that moment God said to the* [*angel*](angels.html) *in charge of wrath: ‘ Go down and blow up a spark in his belly and fan his ashes and throw sulphur into his oven.’ R. Johanan said: All the years from the* [*time*](time.html) *when Vashti was killed till* [*Esther*](esther.html) *became queen, the wrath of Achashverosh was not assuaged. They cited in objection to this: When the wrath of king Achashverosh was assuaged (Est. X). He replied: It is not written be-shok, but ‘ke-shok’; it was assuaged and yet not assuaged. When was his wrath really assuaged? When* [*Haman*](esther.html) *was hung, as it says, “So they hanged* [*Haman*](esther.html) *on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then was the king’s wrath assuaged” (ibid. VII, 10)- [this means also] the wrath of the Supreme King of kings, the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He.*

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah -*** [***Esther***](esther.html) ***IV:10*** *AND WHEN THE KING’S DECREE... SHALL BE PUBLISHED, etc. (I, 20). R. Levi and R.* [*Isaac*](isaac.html) *each gave an explanation of this. R. Levi said: It means: We shall* [*one*](one.html) *day hear a great pronouncement from this* [*one*](one.html) *[*[*Esther*](esther.html)*] who was to become queen, namely, There was great* [*mourning*](mourning.html) *among the* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html) *(*[*Esther*](esther.html) *4:3). R.* [*Isaac*](isaac.html)*, whoever, said: We shall* [*one*](one.html) *day hear a great pronouncement from this* [*one*](one.html) *who was to become queen, namely, The* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html) *had gladness and joy (*[*Esther*](esther.html) *8:17). R. Judah b. R. Simon interpreted: AND THE KING’S DECREE... SHALL BE PUBLISHED [lit. HEARD]: the decree of the supreme King of kings, the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, who said in His wisdom and in His understanding, I will utterly blot out the remembrance of* [*Amalek*](amalek.html) *from under the* [*heaven*](heaven.html) *(Shemot 17:14). GREAT THOUGH IT BE. Rab and Samuel gave different interpretations.* [*One*](one.html) *said: This kingdom is great for this offence; the other said: This offence is great for this kingdom. ALL THE WIVES WILL GIVE TO THEIR HUSBANDS HONOUR, etc.*

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah -*** [***Esther***](esther.html) ***X:1*** *ON THAT NIGHT COULD NOT THE KING* [*SLEEP*](mashal.html) *[lit. THE* [*SLEEP*](mashal.html) *OF THE KING WAS SHAKEN] (VI, X): the* [*heavens*](heaven.html)*, the throne of the Supreme King of kings, the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, were shaken when He saw Israel in such distress.’ Is God then subject to* [*sleep*](mashal.html)*? Is it not said, Behold, He that keepeth Israel doth neither slumber nor* [*sleep*](mashal.html) *(Tehillim.71:4)? It can happen, however, when Israel are in distress and the other* [*nations*](nations.html) *are at ease; therefore it says, Awake, why sleepest Thou, O Lord? (Tehillim 44:24). King Achashverosh’s* [*sleep*](mashal.html) *was also disturbed, because he saw in a* [*dream*](dreams.html)[*Haman*](esther.html) *seizing a sword to kill him, and he awoke in terror from his* [*sleep*](mashal.html) *and told his scribes to bring the book of the chronicles to see what* [*events*](feasts.html) *had occurred, and they opened the book and found how Mordecai had informed against Bigthan and Teresh. So when they said to the king, BEHOLD,* [*HAMAN*](esther.html) *STANDETH IN THE COURT (VI, 5), the king said: ‘What I saw in my* [*dream*](dreams.html) *is true; this fellow has only come at this* [*time*](time.html) *of day to kill me.’*

[HaShem](hashem.html) and Achashverosh both had books where they recorded the deeds of the righteous:

[***Esther***](esther.html) ***6:1*** *On that night could not the king* [*sleep*](mashal.html)*, and he commanded to bring the book of records of the chronicles; and they were read before the king.*

***Revelation 20:12*** *And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is [the book] of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.*

## The [Seven](seven.html) Chamberlains

([Seven](seven.html) [Angels](angels.html) of Confusion)

**Mehuman** - Confusion

**Biztha** - Destruction of the House

**Harbona** - Annihilation

**Bigtha** - Pressers of the Winepress

**Abagtha** - Pressers of the Winepress

**Zethar** Observer of Immorality

**Carcas** – Knocker

The [Midrash](orallaw.html) suggests that these [seven](seven.html) chamberlains allude to [angels](angels.html):

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah -*** [***Esther***](esther.html) ***III:12*** *HE COMMANDED MEHUMAN, BIZZETHA, etc. R. Johanan said: At that moment God summoned the* [*angel*](angels.html) *in charge of wrath and said to him: ‘ BIZZETHA- despoil his house (buz bethe); HARBONA-lay waste his house (ahrib bethe); BIGTHA and ABAGTHA- spoil and plunder.’ R. Simeon b. R. Jannai said: The Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, said: ‘I will make sport of them: I will bring the women who are behind the pressers in the wine-vats.’ ZETHAR: R.* [*Jacob*](israelja.html) *b. Ahina translated this in the presence o f R.* [*Isaac*](isaac.html)*: It means, See the lewdness (zenuth re’eh) of that* [*wicked*](wicked.html) *man. AND CARCAS: It is written circasa. R. Samuel h. Nahman said: This is a Greek word, as we say, circasun. THE* [*SEVEN*](seven.html) *CHAMBERLAINS THAT MINISTERED IN THE PRESENCE OF AHASUERUS THE KING: because the Government does not appoint less than* [*seven*](seven.html) *chamberlains before the king.*

Some say that Harbona is really the prophet Elijah in disguise.

## The [Seven](seven.html) princes of Persia and Media

**Carshena**

**Shethar**

**Admatha**

**Tarshish**

**Meres**

**Marsena**

**Memuchan** **- Another** [**name**](name.html)[**Haman**](esther.html)**.**

## Queen Vashti

Queen **Vashti** was chosen to be the [first](one.html) queen of Achashverosh. She is a [Babylonian](bavel.html) princess, the granddaughter of Nebuchadnezzar. She is the epitome of royalty and the epitome of the [Goyim](gen-jew.html), the [Gentiles](gen-jew.html).

Queen Vashti plans a most interesting role as a picture of the Bnei Israel, going against the wishes of [HaShem](hashem.html). It is the picture of the Bnei Israel assimilated and becoming [Gentiles](gen-jew.html). Since she is a [Babylonian](bavel.html) [Gentile](gen-jew.html), she is the epitome of the [Gentiles](gen-jew.html) and of their estrangement from “The King”. In a sense, queen Vashti represents all peoples before the Bnei Israel were chosen.

Queen Vashti also plays the role of the anti-[Mashiach](mashiach.html) (the anti-[Mashiach](mashiach.html) in Christian thinking). A queen who fails to do the wishes of the King of kings, who fails to perform the [mitzvot](cmds613.html), is a queen that has to die. It is this role that a [new](new.html) queen, a [new](new.html) people, a [new](new.html) [Mashiach](mashiach.html) be chosen. Consider the following passage:

[***Esther***](esther.html) ***1:10-12*** *On the* [*seventh*](seven.html) *day, when the* [*heart*](body.html) *of the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, and Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, the* [*seven*](seven.html) *chamberlains that served in the presence of Achashverosh the king, To bring Vashti the queen before the king with the crown royal, to shew the people and the princes her beauty: for she [was] fair to look on. But the queen Vashti refused to come at the king’s* [*commandment*](cmds613.html) *by [his] chamberlains: therefore was the king very wroth, and his anger burned in him.*

Note “The King”, AKA [HaShem](hashem.html), has called her into his presence. We [know](daat.html) from Shir HaShirim, the Song of Songs, that Israel is described as a very beautiful maiden[[5]](#footnote-5). She refuses to come. For her [sin](sin.html) of disobeying “The King”, she receives the death penalty. The Bnei Israel had been permitted to return to Israel and to rebuild the [Temple](temple.html) for many years. Instead of ending their [exile](galuyot.html) and returning to [HaShem](hashem.html), they prefer to ignore [HaShem](hashem.html) and attend the party of Achashverosh instead. They have become assimilated. They have become [Gentiles](gen-jew.html).

When Queen Vashti, AKA the [Gentiles](gen-jew.html) and a disobedient Bnei Israel, refuses to come, the nobles note that this will lead to the other woman also disobeying. These women would represent the other [nations](nations.html) of the [world](worlds.html) who would see the example of the Bnei Israel and follow them. As Israel is compared to the wife of [HaShem](hashem.html), so the other wives would be linked to their gods as wives. Since they did not heed [HaShem](hashem.html), then they would not heed [HaShem](hashem.html):

[***Esther***](esther.html) ***1:16-18*** *And Memuchan answered before the king and the princes, Vashti the queen hath not done wrong to the king only, but also to all the princes, and to all the people that [are] in all the provinces of the king Achashverosh. For [this] deed of the queen shall come abroad unto all women, so that they shall despise their husbands in their* [*eyes*](body.html)*, when it shall be reported, The king Achashverosh commanded Vashti the queen to be brought in before him, but she came not. [Likewise] shall the ladies of Persia and Media say this day unto all the king’s princes, which have heard of the deed of the queen. Thus [shall there arise] too much contempt and wrath.*

## Mordechai

Mordechai. To understand Mordechai we need to have some understanding of Binyamin’s role in the destruction of [Amalek](amalek.html).

It is well [known](daat.html) that the [Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben David will soon rule and reign. What is not so well [known](daat.html) is that we must have a king from the [tribe](tribes.html) of Binyamin, before the King [Mashiach](mashiach.html), from the [tribe](tribes.html) of Yehuda begins to rule. We see this pattern in the early days of the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) monarchy when Saul *son of Kish* was chosen by [HaShem](hashem.html) to precede King David[[6]](#footnote-6). The [festival](festival.html) of [Purim](Purim.html) is a [time](time.html) to [study](study.html) and consider the destruction of the [Amalekites](amalek.html).

Why are the [Amalekites](amalek.html) given to destruction by the sons of Binyamin? The Sages [teach](teacher.html) us that in the incident where [Yaaqov](jacob.html) encountered [Esau](edom.html) as he returned from Lavan, [Yaaqov](jacob.html) and his whole family bowed down to [Esau](edom.html). However, [Benjamin](benyamin.html) did NOT bow down because he was not yet born.

It is tradition that the children of [Esav](edom.html) are only defeated by the children of [Rachel](rachel.html)”[[7]](#footnote-7).

In the same manner, Mordechai, *a descendent of Kish*, the Benjamite never bowed down to [Haman](esther.html) the descendant of [Amalek](amalek.html) and of [Esau](edom.html).

[***Esther***](esther.html) ***3:2*** *And all the king’s servants, that [were] in the king’s gate, bowed, and reverenced* [*Haman*](esther.html)*: for the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai bowed not, nor did [him] reverence.*

The primary task of the Benjamite king is to destroy [Amalek](amalek.html). Saul did not succeed in this task.

***1 Shmuel 15:7*** *And Saul smote the* [*Amalekites*](amalek.html) *from Havilah [until] thou comest to Shur, that [is] over against Egypt. 8 And he took Agag the king of the* [*Amalekites*](amalek.html) *alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword.*

Megillat [Esther](esther.html) tells us in detail, the destruction of [Haman](esther.html), and his [ten](ten.html) sons who were [Amalekites](amalek.html). We are told explicitly that Mordechai was a descendant of Binyamin and a descendant of Kish, just as King Saul was a descendant of Kish.

[***Esther***](esther.html) ***2:5*** *[Now] in Shushan the palace there was a certain* [*Jew*](gen-jew.html)*, whose* [*name*](name.html) *[was] Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjamite; Who had been carried away from* [*Jerusalem*](city.html) *with the captivity which had been carried away with Jeconiah king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of* [*Babylon*](bavel.html) *had carried away.*

This [insight](insights.html) will also help us with an enigmatic passage with its own allusion[[8]](#footnote-8):

[***Esther***](esther.html) ***4:14*** *For if thou altogether hold thy peace at this* [*time*](time.html)*, [then] shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html)*? from another place; but thou and thy father’s house shall be destroyed: and who knows whether thou art come to the kingdom for [such] a* [*time*](time.html) *as this?*

Why would [Esther](esther.html)’s “silence” and non-intervention on behalf of the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people cause her father’s house to perish?

King Shaul was instructed to destroy the entire people of [Amalek](amalek.html). Out of compassion for their leader Agag, he spared his life. The next morning the prophet Shmuel killed Agag and admonished Shaul for not following instructions. The preceding night however, Agag married a maid who later gave [birth](birth.html) to the ancestor of [Haman](esther.html).

Mordechai reminded [Esther](esther.html) that she was a descendant of King Shaul and that her rise to glory was by Divine Providence. By bringing about the downfall of [Haman](esther.html) she would remove the blemish on King Shaul, which was caused by his oversight. Should the [salvation](salvation.html) of the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people come about through other means, her father’s house would perish due to King Saul’s un-forgiven iniquity.

(As an aside, Mordechai the Benjamite is also called a man of Yehuda. Perhaps this is a suggestion that these [two](two.html) are brought together in a single man. This may also help us to see Mordechai in the role of [Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben David. In this role, we see him leading the battles of [HaShem](hashem.html), building up the “lively stones” of the living [Temple](temple.html), and acting as the Rosh Bet Din, the Chief Judge.)

The kingship of Mordechai is alluded to when he gets a haircut, wears the king’s clothes, and is paraded through the streets on the king’s horse. His kingship is finalized in:

[***Esther***](esther.html) ***8:15*** *And Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal apparel of blue and white, and with a great crown of gold, and with a* [*garment*](garment.html) *of fine linen and purple: and the* [*city*](city.html) *of Shushan rejoiced and was glad.*

The [Midrash](orallaw.html) also takes up this theme:

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah -*** [***Esther***](esther.html) ***X:12*** *AND MORDECAI WENT FORTH FROM THE PRESENCE OF THE KING IN ROYAL APPAREL, etc. (VIII, 15). R. Phinehas says: Mordecai was king of the* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html)*. A king wears purple, and Mordecai wore purple; a king has a crown encircling his* [*head*](body.html)*, and Mordecai was arrayed WITH A GREAT CROWN OF GOLD; the* [*fear*](fear.html) *of the king is over all the land, and so the* [*fear*](fear.html) *of Mordecai was upon them, as it says, Because the* [*fear*](fear.html) *of Mordecai was fallen upon them (Est. IX, 3); a king’s coinage is current throughout the land, and Mordecai’s coinage was current. What was the coinage of Mordecai? It had Mordecai on* [*one*](one.html) *side and* [*Esther*](esther.html) *on the other. Why all this? Because he was a good man and a man of peace and he sought peace, as it says, For Mordecai the* [*Jew*](gen-jew.html) *was... seeking the good of his people and* [*speaking*](mashal.html) *peace to all his* [*seed*](flower.html) *(ibid. X 3). Of him Scripture says, Mark the man of integrity and behold the upright; for there is a* [*future*](future.html) *for the man of peace (Ps. XXXVII, 37).*

As King Saul tried to avoid being King by hiding in the baggage, so Mordechai neither asked for, nor wanted, to be treated as a King.

Mordechai’s refusal to bow was an allusion and a [tikkun](tikkun.html):

[***Esther***](esther.html) ***3:2*** *And all the king’s servants, that [were] in the king’s gate, bowed, and reverenced* [*Haman*](esther.html)*: for the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai bowed not, nor did [him] reverence.*

The [Midrash](orallaw.html) relates that when Mordechai would not kneel, [Haman](esther.html) said to Mordechai: “Are you better than your ancestors, who bowed to my ancestor [Esau](edom.html)?” (Bereshit 33:3) To which Mordechai replied, “My ancestor, [Benjamin](benyamin.html), was not yet born at the [time](time.html), and did not bow.”

According to Rabbi [Isaac](isaac.html) Luria, Mordechai was a reincarnation of [Jacob](israelja.html), and [Haman](esther.html) of [Esau](edom.html). Mordechai’s refusal to bow rectified [Jacob](israelja.html)’s bowing to [Esau](edom.html).

\* \* \*

There is another opinion that suggests that Mordechai represents Torah and is comparable to Moshe Rabeinu. The [name](name.html) “Mordechai” comes from “Marduk”, the god of [creation](bara.html) in many mythologies throughout the Near [East](east.html). The meaning of his [name](name.html) also demonstrates a [connection](connection.html) to [Mashiach](mashiach.html), The Living Torah, who created everything.

Others suggest that Mordechai represents the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people. This may be understood. I think, only in [connection](connection.html) with the understanding that Mordechai and [Esther](esther.html) were married and therefore soul mates, [two](two.html) sides of the same coin.

## Queen [Esther](esther.html)

The pattern in Megillat [Esther](esther.html) also suggests that Queen [Esther](esther.html) is a picture of the Children of Israel and of [Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben [Yosef](joseph.html). More particularly, [Esther](esther.html) also plays the role of the [Kohen](kohen.html) Gadol, the [High Priest](priests.html) on Yom HaKippurim! We have dealt extensively with the [connection](connection.html) between the Children of Israel and [Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben [Yosef](joseph.html). This [connection](connection.html) between the Bnei Israel and [Mashiach](mashiach.html) also explains the feminine gender [connection](connection.html). The [body](body.html) formed by the Bnei Israel is headed by [Mashiach](mashiach.html) and is always referred to in the feminine gender. Consider the following pasuk as [one](one.html) small indicator of Israel’s gender:

***Yehezekel (Ezekiel) 16:2-9*** *Son of man, cause* [*Jerusalem*](city.html) *to* [*know*](daat.html) *her abominations, And say, Thus saith the Lord* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *unto* [*Jerusalem*](city.html)*; Thy* [*birth*](birth.html) *and thy nativity [is] of the land of Canaan; thy father [was] an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite. And [as for] thy nativity, in the day thou wast born thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple [thee]; thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all. None eye pitied thee, to do any of these unto thee, to have compassion upon thee; but thou wast cast out in the open* [*field*](field.html)*, to the loathing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born. And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own* [*blood*](body.html)*, I said unto thee [when thou wast] in thy* [*blood*](body.html)*, Live; yea, I said unto thee [when thou wast] in thy* [*blood*](body.html)*, Live. I have caused thee to multiply as the bud of the* [*field*](field.html)*, and thou hast increased and waxen great, and thou art come to excellent ornaments: [thy]* [*breasts*](body.html) *are fashioned, and thine* [*hair*](hair.html) *is grown, whereas thou [wast] naked and bare. Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy* [*time*](time.html) *[was] the* [*time*](time.html) *of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I swore unto thee, and entered into a* [*covenant*](covenant.html) *with thee, saith the Lord* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, and thou became mine. Then washed I thee with water; yea, I thoroughly washed away thy* [*blood*](body.html) *from thee, and I anointed thee with oil.*

We see that the trouble of the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people stem from a very real [sin](sin.html):

[***Esther***](esther.html) ***3:8*** *And* [*Haman*](esther.html) *said unto king Achashverosh, There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and their* [*laws*](law.html) *[are] diverse from all people; neither keep they the king’s* [*laws*](law.html)*: therefore it [is] not for the king’s profit to suffer them.*

[Haman](esther.html) describes the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people, as people who do not keep “The Kings” [laws](law.html). That is, they were not keeping the [laws](law.html) of [HaShem](hashem.html). We [know](daat.html) that if the Bnei Israel do not keep [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [mitzvot](cmds613.html), then there is no reason to “suffer them”, as we saw at Mt. [Sinai](stages.html) with the golden calf.

When [Esther](esther.html) went into Achashverosh, at the behest of Mordechai, she was transgressing an explicit [command](cmds613.html) of the Torah. It is forbidden for a [Jewish](gen-jew.html) woman to voluntarily submit to fornication with a [Gentile](gen-jew.html). Further, since Chazal [teach](teacher.html) that [Esther](esther.html) was married to Mordechai, she would be transgressing the [command](cmds613.html), which forbids adultery. These transgressions are so severe, according to Chazal, that we should allow ourselves to be killed rather than transgress them:

***Sanhedrin 74a*** *R. Johanan said in the* [*name*](name.html) *of R. Simeon b. Jehozadak: By a majority vote, it was resolved in the upper chambers of the house of Nithza in Lydda that in every [other]* [*law*](law.html) *of the Torah, if a man is commanded: ‘Transgress and suffer not death’ he may transgress and not suffer death, excepting* [*idolatry*](idolatry.html)*, incest, [which includes adultery] and murder.*

[Esther](esther.html) is not saved by a miracle or a [plague](plagues.html). [*Esther*](esther.html) *is left alone*. She realizes what she must do for her people, and her response is telling: She instructs Mordechai to [gather](gather.html) the [nation](nations.html) to [pray](prayer.html) and fast for her. Her identity will thereby become [known](daat.html) in the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [community](community.html), but by this point this is no longer an issue: If she is to become a willing participant in [sin](sin.html) with the whole [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [community](community.html) (when they attended Achashverosh’s feast), it no longer matters if the people [know](daat.html) who she is. Forfeiting her “passive victim” status wipes out her hope for a share in the [Olam HaBa](futures.html) (the [World](futures.html) to Come) regardless of the public or private nature of her transgressions. In fact, her plan cannot succeed if it is carried out secretly: for the plan to be successful, *the entire* [*Jewish*](gen-jew.html)[*community*](community.html) must join together. [Esther](esther.html) and the entire [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [community](community.html) are [one](one.html) with regard to this problem of [sin](sin.html).

[Esther](esther.html) = The Children of Israel.

There is an interesting approach to this problem in the Ohr Gedalyahu by Rav [Gedaliah](gedaliah.html) Shor. Rav Shor describes the mystical nature of the phenomenon that purposeful [sins](sin.html) can be turned into [merits](merit.html) through repentance done with love (as opposed to [fear](fear.html)). He explains how the ‘evil cause’ transforms into a ‘positive cause’. This is perhaps the nature of the reversal of fortunes, which so permeates our [Purim](Purim.html) story. The most striking ‘reversal’ is when [Haman](esther.html) rushes to the palace for permission to execute Mordechai, but is tricked into deciding a proper reward for him.

Rav Shor seems to be suggesting that [Esther](esther.html) is the quintessential Baal Teshuva, repentant sinner[[9]](#footnote-9). In essence, [Esther](esther.html) committed a [sin](sin.html) for the sake of [Heaven](heaven.html). In committing this transgression, for the sake of [Heaven](heaven.html), she followed in the footsteps of Tamar and Lots daughters. The [Talmud](orallaw.html) provides this [insight](insights.html):

***Nazir 23b*** *‘Ulla said: Both Tamar and Zimri committed adultery. Tamar committed adultery and gave* [*birth*](birth.html) *to kings and prophets. Zimri committed adultery and on his account many tens of thousands of Israel perished. R. Nahman b.* [*Isaac*](isaac.html) *said: A transgression performed with good intention is better than a precept performed with evil intention.*

When viewed from this perspective, [Esther](esther.html) is a most excellent picture of [Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben [Yosef](joseph.html). [Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben [Yosef](joseph.html), called [Yeshua](yeshua.html), took on the [sins](sin.html) of the [world](worlds.html):

***I Yochanan (John) 2:2*** *And he is the propitiation for our* [*sins*](sin.html)*: and not for ours only, but also for [the* [*sins*](sin.html) *of] the whole* [*world*](worlds.html)*.*

***II Corinthians 5:21*** *For he hath made him [to be]* [*sin*](sin.html) *for us, who* [*knew*](daat.html) *no* [*sin*](sin.html)*; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*

Taking on the [sins](sin.html) of the [world](worlds.html) would have made [Yeshua](yeshua.html) the worst of sinners. His ability to be accepted by [HaShem](hashem.html), after taking on this [sin](sin.html), would be [one](one.html) of the most spectacular reversals the [world](worlds.html) has ever seen. [Yeshua](yeshua.html) succeeded in converting all of those [sins](sin.html) into [mitzvot](cmds613.html)! [Yeshua](yeshua.html) did all for the sake of [Heaven](heaven.html)!

Now, let’s look at the most [awesome](awesome.html) role that [Esther](esther.html) played, that of [Kohen](kohen.html) Gadol, The [High Priest](priests.html), on Yom HaKippurim!

The following section comes from a shiur given by Rabbi Ari Kahn.

[Esther](esther.html)’s real [name](name.html), Haddasa, is related to a pleasant smell, a [redemptive](redemption.html) smell not unlike the [ketoret](ketoret.html). In explaining the use of the [Four](four.html) Species in the rituals of [Succoth](succoth.html), The [Midrash](orallaw.html)[[10]](#footnote-10) tells us that each has different characteristics, representing the totality of the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) People. The Haddas has a beautiful smell but lacks taste, representing [Jews](gen-jew.html) who perform good deeds but lack Torah [knowledge](knowledge.html). In other words, the defeat of [Haman](esther.html) was brought about through Mordechai and [Esther](esther.html), who together symbolize the sense of smell, the oasis of [purity](purity.html) in a tainted [world](worlds.html). Mordechai and [Esther](esther.html) represent the exalted avodah of the [ketoret](ketoret.html)performed by the [Kohen](kohen.html) Gadol in the Holy of Holies on [Yom Kippur](kippur.html).

When Mordechai exhorts [Esther](esther.html) to take action, [Esther](esther.html) must enter the king’s inner chamber. Her plan is fraught with danger: If she does not find favor in his [eyes](body.html), she runs the risk of immediate execution. She prepares herself [spiritually](physical.html) through fasting and [prayer](prayer.html), but her plan of action is not exactly innocent. She is well aware that the best way of finding favor with the libidinous Achashverosh is through seduction. Now, the sweet young [Jewish](gen-jew.html) girl Haddasa, dressed as Queen [Esther](esther.html), would have yet another role to play: Up to this point, she was quite ambiguous in her role. She was taken to the palace, but took no active part in the competition for the throne. She did not make any effort to ingratiate herself to Achashverosh, asking for nothing to make her herself more alluring. Now, [Esther](esther.html) was now forced to play a [new](new.html) role, of courtesan.

The [Talmud](orallaw.html) discusses the ramifications of this change of role upon her personal status: Up to this point she was halachically considered a victim of rape. She was a passive, even unwilling participant in the [events](feasts.html) which had swept her into Achashverosh’s harem. Strangely, her passivity was interpreted by Achashverosh as aristocratic: Her standoffish attitude reminded Achashverosh of his former wife, the regal Vashti, and it was this aloof and in submissive demeanor that helped her “win” the contest for Vashti’s vacant throne. The moment that [Esther](esther.html) takes action, entering the king’s chamber willingly, enticing, and inviting, intent on winning the king’s favor by any means, her personal status is forever changed. She clearly [knew](daat.html) what she would have to do to find favor with Achashverosh, and she laments her fate for she knows she is lost:

[***Esther***](esther.html) ***4:16*** *Go,* [*gather*](gather.html) *together all the* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html) *who are present in Shushan, and fast for me, and neither* [*eat*](eating.html) *nor drink* [*three*](three.html) *days, night or day; I also and my girls will fast likewise; and so will I go to the king, though it is against the* [*law*](law.html)*; for as I am lost, I am lost.*

***Megila 15a*** *R. Abba said: It will not be “according to the custom of every other day”. Until now [I have associated with Achashverosh] under compulsion, but now I will do so of my own will. “For if I am lost, I am lost.” As I am lost to my father’s house so I shall be lost to thee.*

[Esther](esther.html) will initiate a tryst that will change her forever. Her behavior poses extremely difficult moral and legal dilemmas,[[11]](#footnote-11) but this is what she feels she must do; this, she understands, is what Mordechai has commanded her to do. And so she prepares by rallying the support of the [nation](nations.html), by fasting and [praying](prayer.html); then, she puts on her costume and enters the inner chamber of *The King*.

[***Esther***](esther.html) ***5:1*** *And it came to pass on the* [*third*](three.html) *day,* [*Esther*](esther.html) *put[[12]](#footnote-12) on royal dress, and stood in the inner court of the king’s palace, opposite the king’s palace; and the king sat upon his royal throne in the royal palace, opposite the gate of the house.*

It is specifically on these words that the [Zohar](orallaw.html) makes the comparison between [Yom Kippur](kippur.html)im and [Purim](Purim.html): Lest you think that [Esther](esther.html) is entering the inner chamber to conduct herself in a sordid manner, the [Zohar](orallaw.html) says that [Esther](esther.html)’s putting on the royal garb is just like the [Kohen](kohen.html) Gadol dressing in the priestly garments. She enters the inner chamber like the [Kohen](kohen.html) Gadol. In the story of [Purim](Purim.html), when everything is “upside down”, a beautiful [Jewish](gen-jew.html) girl in far-away Persia enters into the inner chamber to [save](salvation.html) her people and *she becomes the* [*Kohen*](kohen.html) *Gadol*: This is [Yom Kippur](kippur.html)im, when (the [Kohen](kohen.html) Gadol) is clothed in beautiful clothing, clothing of [atonement](atonemen.html): The [four](four.html) white garments from the right side, the [four](four.html) garments of gold from the left side. At that [time](time.html) she ([Esther](esther.html)) beautified herself with clothing of [forgiveness](forgive.html). That is what is meant by the verse, “And [Esther](esther.html) put on royal clothing”. And with these garments she entered into the inner sanctum. That is the meaning of the verse “She stood in the inner chamber of the King”. “She found favor in His [eyes](body.html)”, this is the mystery...immediately God heard, God forgave... [Purim](Purim.html) is named for [Yom Kippur](kippur.html)im... [[13]](#footnote-13)

[Esther](esther.html) enters the inner sanctum, not motivated by lust, not for money or power. She enters motivated solely by love for her people and her [desire](needs.html) to [save](salvation.html) them; she enters as the [Kohen](kohen.html) Gadol*.* [Esther](esther.html) is Haddasa, a pleasant smell, a [redemptive](redemption.html) smell like the [ketoret](ketoret.html).[[14]](#footnote-14) [Esther](esther.html)’s deeds were indeed beautiful, performed with [purity](purity.html)[[15]](#footnote-15) and total self-[sacrifice](korbanot.html): she [knew](daat.html) that willingly entering the chamber of Achashverosh and seducing him would bear a heavy cost, in this [world](worlds.html) (for she would be unable to return to Mordechai[[16]](#footnote-16)) and in the next (for she would be guilty of [one](one.html) of the [three](three.html) [sins](sin.html) for which [one](one.html) should give up their life[[17]](#footnote-17)). As in the case of Aharon, the [First](one.html) [Kohen](kohen.html) Gadol, [Esther](esther.html) was prepared to [sacrifice](korbanot.html) her soul for the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) People.[[18]](#footnote-18) Just as Aharon’s [sin](sin.html) in the episode of the Golden Calf was performed to [save](salvation.html) the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people from destruction, so [Esther](esther.html) transgressed in the chambers of Achashverosh in order to [save](salvation.html) the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) People from annihilation. And in both cases, [HaShem](hashem.html) accepted their [sacrifice](korbanot.html), understood their total devotion, spared the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people because of their personal [sacrifice](korbanot.html), and elevated them both a [new](new.html) status: Aharon became [Kohen](kohen.html) Gadol, and [Esther](esther.html) joined the pantheon of [Jewish](gen-jew.html) heroism; according to the [Zohar](orallaw.html), for at least [one](one.html) day [Esther](esther.html) functioned as [Kohen](kohen.html) Gadol, just like Aharon.

[Esther](esther.html)’s behavior once she gained access to the inner sanctum was very carefully planned: [First](one.html), she befriended [Haman](esther.html). She bribed him with her friendship. And when his guard was down, she gave him and Achashverosh wine, made from the fruit of the Tree of [Knowledge](thetree.html) of Good and Evil.[[19]](#footnote-19) Just as on [Yom Kippur](kippur.html)im a gift is given to Azazel, just as [Yaaqov](jacob.html) gave a gift to [Esav](edom.html), [Esther](esther.html) bestowed gifts of her own: Her [physical](physical.html) beauty and the mesmerizing scent of pure [incense](ketoret.html) captured her unsuspecting enemies and brought [salvation](salvation.html) to the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) People. Later, when the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) People [studied](study.html) the [events](feasts.html) that led to their rescue, they understood the transformation of [sin](sin.html) into [salvation](salvation.html):[[20]](#footnote-20) Rav Tzadok of Lublin points out that the lesson could not have been missed by the [Jews](gen-jew.html) of Shushan who had participated in the sinful feast of [Haman](esther.html) and Achashverosh: The very same vehicles with which they had sinned, used for pure motives by [Esther](esther.html)/Haddasa, brought about their own [salvation](salvation.html). [Sin](sin.html) can be turned on its [head](body.html); evil can be co-opted, turned into good. chelbona can be turned into [ketoret](ketoret.html). Both Aharon and [Esther](esther.html) possessed the ability to make this change.

[Purim](Purim.html)[[21]](#footnote-21) and [Yom Kippur](kippur.html)im are the [two](two.html) sides of this coin. In truth, [Purim](Purim.html) and [Yom Kippur](kippur.html)im are [one](one.html)!

*End Rabbi Ari Kahn’s comments.*

**[Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben** [**Yosef**](joseph.html) **= The Children of Israel**

(As an aside: The [Talmud](orallaw.html) [teaches](teacher.html) that Teshuva motivated by love of [HaShem](hashem.html) is so profound that it can transform a [sin](sin.html) into a [mitzva](cmds613.html). Perhaps a “[sin](sin.html) performed for the sake of [Heaven](heaven.html)” is another expression of the same idea. We, too, have the ability to [convert](aliens.html) [sins](sin.html) into [mitzvot](cmds613.html). Teshuva, repentance, is the mechanism that we use to accomplish this feat. After all, if a [sin](sin.html) causes us to repent, that [sin](sin.html) was a most marvelous thing. Because of that [sin](sin.html), we obtain [forgiveness](forgive.html) and [oneness](oneness.html) with [HaShem](hashem.html).)

(Obviously this concept of justified [sin](sin.html) is dangerous territory. All sorts of people [justify](justification.html) their [sins](sin.html) without going so far as to convince themselves that in actuality they are performing a [mitzvah](cmds613.html). According to Chazal, the conditions needed to qualify as “a [sin](sin.html) performed for the sake of [Heaven](heaven.html)” are twofold:

1. The intention must be to [save](salvation.html) the entire [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people.

2. No personal gain or enjoyment should be involved. [Esther](esther.html)’s actions fulfilled both conditions. Other commentaries add a [third](three.html) condition: a Rabbi, Beit Din, or Prophet must have given the order to perform that particular [sin](sin.html), as in the case of [Esther](esther.html) and Mordechai.)

The [event](feasts.html) which leads to the selection of [Esther](esther.html) as queen, is a party thrown by Achashverosh, which was attended by [Jews](gen-jew.html). In attending the earthly king’s party, the [Jews](gen-jew.html) were throwing off the yoke of Torah and demonstrating their great need for the [Mashiach](mashiach.html) who would lead them back to the ways of Torah.

Tehillim 22 opens with the famous phrase:

***Tehillim (***[***Psalm***](psalms1.html)***) 22:1*** *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? [why art thou so] far from helping me, [and from] the words of my roaring?*

The [Gemara](orallaw.html) puts this pasuk in Queen [Esther](esther.html)’s [mouth](body.html):

***Megillah 15b*** *And stood in the inner court of the king’s house. R. Levi said: When she reached the chamber of the idols, the Divine Presence left her. She said, My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me. Dost thou perchance punish the inadvertent offence like the presumptuous* [*one*](one.html)*, or* [*one*](one.html) *done under compulsion like* [*one*](one.html) *done willingly? Or is it because I called him ‘dog’, as it says. Deliver my soul from the sword, mine only* [*one*](one.html) *from the power of the dog? She straightway retracted and called him lion, as it says.* [*Save*](salvation.html) *me from the lion’s* [*mouth*](body.html)*.*

The Nazarean Codicil puts this pasuk in [Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben [Yosef](joseph.html)’s [mouth](body.html):

***Matityahu (Matthew) 27:46*** *And about the* [*ninth*](nine.html) *hour* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *cried with a loud* [*voice*](voice.html)*, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

[Esther](esther.html) is thus seen in allegory as [Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben [Yosef](joseph.html).

[Esther](esther.html) was the daughter of **AviChayil. AviChayil is a** [Hebrew](hebrew.html) **word that has a meaning of: “My Father is strong”. This is most appropriate as a** [remez](remez.html)**, or a hint, to** [HaShem](hashem.html)**, the** [Mashiach](mashiach.html) **ben** [Yosef](joseph.html)**’s Heavenly Father:**

***Matityahu (Matthew) 18:35*** *So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts* [*forgive*](forgive.html) *not everyone his brother their trespasses.*

Another pasuk from Megillat [Esther](esther.html) that has strong Messianic overtones is:

[***Esther***](esther.html) ***5:1*** *Now it came to pass on the* [*third*](three.html) *day, that* [*Esther*](esther.html) *donned royalty, and stood in the inner court of the king’s house, over against the king’s house: and the king sat upon his royal throne in the royal house, over against the gate of the house.*

As [His Majesty](yeshua.html) King [Yeshua](yeshua.html) rose on the [third](three.html) day, so Queen [Esther](esther.html) rise on the [third](three.html) day. As [His Majesty](yeshua.html) presented Himself to [HaShem](hashem.html) The King in the Holy of Holies in the [heavens](heaven.html), so queen [Esther](esther.html) presented herself to the king in the inner court. As [HaShem](hashem.html) sits on His throne, so the king sat on his.

## Hegai

Hegai, the keeper of the women, was a picture of Eliyahu HaNavi, Elijah the Prophet. It was his job to prepare the way for [Esther](esther.html) in her role as [Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben [Yosef](joseph.html).

## Hatach

Hatachis also called Daniel:

***Megillah 15a*** *And* [*Esther*](esther.html) *called Hatach. Rab said: Hatach is the same as Daniel. Why was he called Hatach? Because he was degraded [hataku-hu] from his position. Samuel said, Because all affairs of state were decided [nehtakim] by his* [*voice*](voice.html)*.*

***Baba Bathra 4a*** *From whence do we learn that Daniel was punished? Shall I say from the verse, And* [*Esther*](esther.html) *called to Hatach, who, as Rab has told us, was the same as Daniel? This is a sufficient answer if we accept the view of those who say that he was called Hatach because he was cut down [hatach] from his greatness. But on the view of those who say that he was called Hatach because all matters of state were decided [hatach] according to his counsel, what answer can we give? — That he was thrown Into the den of lions.*

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah -*** [***Esther***](esther.html) ***VIII:4*** *THEN CALLED* [*ESTHER*](esther.html) *FOR HATHACH (ibid5). Our teachers there say that Hathach is the same as Daniel, and because he was cut down (katkuhu) from his greatness they called him Hathach. Our teachers here say that he was so called because he made decisions (hatach) on affairs of state. TO* [*KNOW*](daat.html) *WHAT THIS WAS, AND WHY IT WAS. She told him: ‘Go and say to Mordecai that never in their history have Israel been in such a crisis as this. Have Israel perhaps denied [Him of whom they said], This is my God, and I will glorify Him (Ex. XV, 2), or have they perhaps denied the tablets of which it is written, On the* [*one*](one.html) *side and on the other [lit. “on this and on this “] were they written (ibid. XII, 15)? ‘*

## Wise Men

The Wise Men are our Hakhamim, our Rabbis:

***Ether 1:13-14*** *Then the king said to the wise men, which* [*knew*](daat.html) *the times, (for so [was] the king’s manner toward all that* [*knew*](daat.html)[*law*](law.html) *and judgment: And the next unto him [was] Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, [and] Memuchan, the* [*seven*](seven.html) *princes of Persia and Media, which saw the king’s* [*face*](body.html)*, [and] which sat the* [*first*](one.html) *in the kingdom;)*

The [Gemara](orallaw.html) confirms this allegory:

***Megillah 12b*** *And the king said to the wise men. Who are the wise men? — The Rabbis. Who* [*knew*](daat.html) *the times: that is, who* [*knew*](daat.html) *how to intercalate years and fix* [*new*](new.html) *moons. He said to them: Try her for me. They said [to themselves]: What shall we do? If we tell him to put her to death, to-morrow he will become sober again and he will require her from us. Shall we tell him to let her go? She will lose all her respect for royalty. So they said to him: From the day when the* [*Temple*](temple.html) *was destroyed and we were* [*exiled*](galuyot.html) *from our land, counsel has been taken from us and we do not* [*know*](daat.html) *how to judge capital cases. Go to Ammon and* [*Moab*](stages.html) *who have remained in their places like wine that has settled on its lees. They* [*spoke*](mashal.html) *to him thus with good reason, since it is written,* [*Moab*](stages.html) *hath been at ease from his youth, and he hath settled on his lees, and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel, neither hath he gone into captivity. Therefore his taste remaineth in him, and his scent is not changed. Straightway [he did so, as we read], and the next unto him was Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish [etc.]. R. Levi said: Every* [*name*](name.html) *in this verse contains a reference to the sacrifices. Thus, Carshena: the ministering* [*angels*](angels.html) *said to the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He: Sovereign of the Universe, did they ever offer before thee lambs of the* [*first*](one.html) *year [karim bene shanah] as Israel offered before Thee? Shethar: did they ever offer before Thee* [*two*](two.html) *pigeons [shte torim]? Admatha: did they ever build before Thee an altar of earth [adamah]? Tarshish: did they ever minister before Thee in the priestly garments, of which it is written [that they contained] a beryl [tarshish], an onyx, and a jasper? Meres: did they ever stir [mersu] the* [*blood*](body.html) *[of the* [*sacrifice*](korbanot.html)*] before Thee? Marsena: did they ever stir [mersu] the meal-offerings before Thee? Memuchan: did they ever prepare [hekinu] a table before Thee?*

Bigthan and Teresh:

***Megillah 13b*** *In those days, while Mordecai sat in the king’s gate, Bigthan and Teresh were wroth. R. Hiyya b. Abba said in the* [*name*](name.html) *of R. Johanan: The Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, [once] caused a master to be wroth with his servants in order to fulfill the* [*desire*](needs.html) *of a righteous man, namely* [*Joseph*](joseph.html)*, as it says, And there was with us there a young man, a* [*Hebrew*](hebrew.html)*, etc.; and servants with their master in order to perform a miracle for a righteous man, namely, Mordecai, as it is written, ‘And the thing was* [*known*](daat.html) *to Mordecai etc. ‘ R. Johanan said: Bigthan and Teresh were* [*two*](two.html) *Tarseans and conversed in the Tarsean language. They said: From the day this woman came we have been able to get no* [*sleep*](mashal.html)*. Come, let us put poison in the dish so that he will die. They did not* [*know*](daat.html) *that Mordecai was* [*one*](one.html) *of those who had seats in the Chamber of Hewn Stone, and that he understood* [*seventy*](seventy.html) *languages. Said the other to him, But are not my post and your post different? He replied: I will keep guard at my post and at yours. So it is written, And when inquisition was made, he was found, that is to say, they were not [both] found at their posts.*

## [Haman](esther.html)’s Sons

The [ten](ten.html) sons of [Haman](esther.html) the son of Hammedatha, the enemy of the [Jews](gen-jew.html):

Parshandatha,

Dalphon,

Aspatha,

Poratha,

Adalia,

Aridatha,

Parmashta,

Arisai,

Aridai,

Vajezatha.

***Megillah 16b*** *And Parshandatha . . . the* [*ten*](ten.html) *sons of* [*Haman*](esther.html)*. R. Adda from Joppa said: The* [*ten*](ten.html) *sons of* [*Haman*](esther.html) *and the word ‘*[*ten*](ten.html)*’ [which follows] should be said in* [*one*](one.html) *breath. What is the reason? Because their souls all departed together. R. Johanan said: The waw of waizatha must be lengthened like a boat-pole of the river Libruth. What is the reason? Because they were all strung on* [*one*](one.html) *pole. R. Shila, a man of Kefar Temarta, drew a lesson from this saying, All the songs [in Scripture] are written in the form of a half brick over a whole brick, and a whole brick over a half brick, with the exception of this* [*one*](one.html) *and the list of the kings of Canaan which are written in the form of a half brick over a half brick and a whole brick over a whole brick. What is the reason? So that they should never rise again from their downfall.*

## Memuchan

***Megillah 12b*** *And Memuchan said. A Tanna* [*taught*](teacher.html)*: Memuchan is the same as* [*Haman*](esther.html)*, And why was he called Memuchan? Because he was destined [mukan] for punishment. R. Kahana said: From here we see that an ordinary man always pushes himself in front.*

## [Haman](esther.html)

[Haman](esther.html), alias Memuchan, is seen in the role as an accuser. He pictures HaSatan[[22]](#footnote-22), AKA the “Yetzer Hara”, the evil inclination. When properly controlled he is used to proclaim the truth of Mordechai’s greatness. When out of control, [Haman](esther.html) was the greatest master of Lashon hara, derogatory but true speech, which the [world](worlds.html) has ever seen.

When the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people need to be brought to their senses, [Haman](esther.html) is jolly on the spot to take on that role. We see this in his lineage as an “Agagite”. Agag[[23]](#footnote-23) was the king of the [Amalekites](amalek.html) in the days of King Saul. The misplaced mercy of King Saul brought forth [Haman](esther.html). His [desire](needs.html) to be king coupled with his lack of royal [blood](body.html) suggests that he is also a usurper.

[Haman](esther.html) was killed on a stake (gallows) made from the wood of the thorn bush. This suggests another interesting allegory. [Haman](esther.html) died as a substitute for Mordechai (The Benjamite king), as the gallows was built for Mordechai. He dies so that many [Jews](gen-jew.html) would not have to die:

***Yochanan (John) 11:50*** *Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that* [*one*](one.html) *man should die for the people, and that the whole* [*nation*](nations.html) *perish not.*

[Haman](esther.html) dies as the last [Amalekite](amalek.html). As such, his death results in the elimination of [sin](sin.html).

[Esther](esther.html)’s son, Darius the Persian, was fathered by “The King”. He is of royal [blood](body.html) and the flesh and [blood](body.html) of [Esther](esther.html) the [one](one.html) who pictures [Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben [Yosef](joseph.html). Darius the Persian is a picture of [Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben David.

Darius the Persian performed the major tasks that the [Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben David is to perform:

**1**. He ended the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [exile](galuyot.html) in [Babylon](bavel.html) and did everything in his power to re-[gather](gather.html) the [Jews](gen-jew.html) in [Eretz Israel](city.html).

**2**. He was directly responsible for the rebuilding of the [Temple](temple.html).

**3**. He arranged and paid for Torah teachers to begin the task of Torah [teaching](teacher.html) in post-exilic Israel.

This pattern suggests that the [Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben David will be delayed until we have a Benjamite king to destroy all of the [Amalekites](amalek.html).

**“The deeds of the** [**fathers**](fathers.html) **are a** [**sign**](signs.html) **for the children”**

The children of [Rachel](rachel.html) ([Yosef](joseph.html) and Binyamin), who was **outwardly beautiful**, represent our contact with the outside, i.e. the non-[Jewish](gen-jew.html) [world](worlds.html). [Yosef](joseph.html) was indeed a king, but a king over Egypt, a [Gentile](gen-jew.html) [nation](nations.html). Yehoshua, another descendant of [Yosef](joseph.html) (who the Rambam alludes to as a king), had the task of eradicating the [seven](seven.html) [nations](nations.html) from the [land of Israel](city.html). Saul, a descendant of [Benjamin](benyamin.html), had the job of smiting [Amalek](amalek.html). Mordechai and [Esther](esther.html), other descendant of Binyamin, had power, in the obviously [gentile](gen-jew.html) court of Achashverosh. All had to do with “**exterior matters**”.[[24]](#footnote-24)

On the other [hand](fourteen.html), the children of Leah who was **not attractive on the outside**, managed to rule inside, over [Jews](gen-jew.html). They ruled, and will always rule over, and inside, our [nation](nations.html). The [first](one.html) ones to establish the [Beit HaMikdash](mikdash.html), a clearly inner matter in our [nation](nations.html)’s life, were David (in idea) and Solomon (in actions). Both were descendants of Yehuda, a son of Leah. And the ones who served in that [Beit HaMikdash](mikdash.html) were the [Kohanim](priests.html) of the [tribe](tribes.html) of Levy, son of Leah. These “external” kings ruled during times of [Galut](galuyot.html). Once the Geulah comes, and we don’t have to deal with “outside matters” anymore, the only king will be the [Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben David.

This inner and outer aspect can be clearly seen in those who were the redeemers of Israel. The [redemption](redemption.html) [from Egypt](thebirth.html) was through Aharon and Moshe. The saving of the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people from annihilation in the days of Achashverosh was through [Esther](esther.html) and Mordechai and the ultimate [redemption](redemption.html), after which there will no longer be any [exile](galuyot.html), will come through Eliyahu and [Mashiach](mashiach.html).

## [Purim](Purim.html) and [Chanukah](chanukah.html)

**[Purim](Purim.html) corresponds to** [**Rachel**](rachel.html) **and**

[**Chanukah**](chanukah.html) **corresponds to Leah[[25]](#footnote-25).**

The entire episode of [Purim](Purim.html) is filled with hidden and clandestine manifestations of Divine Providence, reflecting the hidden and modest nature of [Rachel](rachel.html). This is what the pasuk in Megillat [Esther](esther.html) alludes to, with the words, “And the king loved [Esther](esther.html) more than all the other women”, “The Almighty (King) loves the way of being served with “hester” ([Esther](esther.html)), modesty and privacy”.

[Chanukah](chanukah.html)’s focus is on publicizing the miracle that occurred, as we are instructed by Chazal to kindle the Menorah outside, reflecting the outward approach of Leah. [Chanukah](chanukah.html) is also a [holiday](festival.html) of “thanksgiving”, indicative of another of Leah’s qualities, her initiative in naming her [fourth](four.html) son, Yehuda (hodaah, i.e. thanks), as an expression of her gratitude to [HaShem](hashem.html) for this additional son. The [two](two.html) approaches of Leah / Yehuda and [Rachel](rachel.html) / [Yosef](joseph.html) are so fundamentally entrenched in the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) dynamic, that the Messianic age can only be brought about with the advent of both “[Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben David”, a scion of Yehuda / Leah and “[Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben [Yosef](joseph.html)”, a scion of [Rachel](rachel.html) / [Yosef](joseph.html).

## Places

Elam was the firstborn of Shem ben Noach. Shushan, the capital [city](city.html) of Elam, was the seat of government of Achashverosh.

The palace contains many allusions to the [Mishkan](mikdash.html) ([Tabernacle](mikdash.html)) / [Beit HaMikdash](mikdash.html) ([Temple](temple.html)). Keep in mind that the author of the Megillah of [Esther](esther.html) expects every reader to be familiar with Tanakh and will pick up any word-associations made here. Among the materials described here are several which are prominent in the [Mishkan](mikdash.html): Tekhelet (royal blue), Argaman (purple), Kessef (silver) and Shesh (marble). Indeed, the [Midrash](orallaw.html) posits that the vessels that, Achashverosh used at this party, were the vessels of the [Mikdash](mikdash.html), this interpretation was probably motivated by the many [Mikdash](mikdash.html)-associations in the description of the party. The inner and the outer sanctums of King Achashverosh have their counterpart in the Holy place and the Holy of Holies.

**Menachem Leibtag’s shiur**

The Megilla refers to the most inner chamber of the king's palace as the "chatzer ha‑pnimit" (5:1), where entry to anyone is forbidden under threat of death - unless CALLED to enter (as [Esther](esther.html) feared in 4:11). Here we find an obvious parallel to the KODESH ha'KODASHIM in the [MIKDASH](mikdash.html) ([Purim](Purim.html)-kippurim!).

The 'waiting area' outside the inner chamber is called the "chatzer ha-chitzona" (6:4). Here "roey pnei ha'Melech (1:14) like [Haman](esther.html) himself are allowed to enter freely. This is parallel to the KODESH where [KOHANIM](priests.html) are permitted to enter. [See description of the [Temple](temple.html) in Yechezkel 40:18‑19.]

In front of the palace is "shaar bet ha'melech" where people like Mordechei are permitted to stand (2:18,21). However, here [one](one.html) must dress properly ("aveilut" is not permitted), therefore he cannot be there dressed in sackcloth (see 4:2!). This area is parallel to the Azara in the [Mikdash](mikdash.html).

This is the area "lifnei shaar ha'melech" (4:2) or "rehov ha'iyr" (4:6) where Mordechei can dress in sackcloth. This is parallel the [city](city.html) of [Yerushalayim](city.html) surrounding the [Mikdash](mikdash.html).

Even the 6‑month party followed by a [seven](seven.html)-day special celebration may parallel the [six](six.html) months that it took to build the [Mishkan](mikdash.html) (from [Yom Kippur](kippur.html) till [Rosh Chodesh](chodesh.html) [Nisan](feasts.html)) followed by the [seven](seven.html)-day "miluim" ceremony. Likewise, Chazal explain, "ve‑keilim mi‑keilim shonim" (1:7) as referring to the vessels of the Bet Ha‑[Mikdash](mikdash.html).

Hence we can conclude that the Megilla's satire suggests that during this [time](time.html) period Am Yisrael had replaced:

* [HaShem](hashem.html) with Achashverosh;
* [HaShem](hashem.html)'s [Temple](temple.html) with Achashverosh's palace; and
* [Yerushalayim](city.html) ha‑BIRA with Shushan ha‑BIRA!

## Names

[***Esther***](esther.html) ***2:5*** *There was a certain* [*Jew*](gen-jew.html) *in Shushan the castle, whose* [*name*](name.html) *was Mordecai the son of Jair the son of Shimei the son of Kish, a Benjamite* - אִישׁ יְהוּדִי, הָיָה בְּשׁוּשַׁן הַבִּירָה; וּשְׁמוֹ מָרְדֳּכַי - Ish YEHUDI haya be‑SHUSHAN Ha‑BIRA ‑ u‑shmo MORDECHEI.

Even though this pasuk is read aloud by the entire congregation, most people do not appreciate its 'sting'. However, an ear tuned to the prophecies of Zecharya and familiar with Tanach immediately catches its irony:

ISH YEHUDI - implies more than simply someone who is [Jewish](gen-jew.html);

HA'BIRA - implies more than just 'the capital [city](city.html)'; and

MORDECHAI - is NOT a [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [name](name.html)!

The phrase *ish yehudi* is mentioned only [ONE](one.html) other [time](time.html) in the entire Tanach, in Zecharya 8:23. There it describes a devout [Jew](gen-jew.html) leading a group of non‑[Jewish](gen-jew.html) followers seeking [HaShem](hashem.html) in the holy [city](city.html) of [Jerusalem](city.html).

The word *ha-bira* in Divrei Hayamim[[26]](#footnote-26) is used by King David to describe specifically the [Bet HaMikdash](mikdash.html) (the [Temple](temple.html)). Prior to the [time](time.html) period of Megillat [Esther](esther.html), the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word *bira* finds no other mention in Tanach.

The [name](name.html) Mordechai is probably the most provocative word in the entire Megilla for it stems from the [name](name.html) of the [Babylonian](bavel.html) deity, Marduk.[[27]](#footnote-27) Prior to the [Babylonian](bavel.html) [exile](galuyot.html), no [one](one.html) would have dared give his son such a 'goyishe' [name](name.html).

[This does not imply that Mordechai was assimilated, rather his [name](name.html) reflects the assimilation of his [generation](toldot.html).]

## 70 DAYS / 70 YEARS

Another seemingly unimportant detail in the Megilla concerning WHEN the [two](two.html) decrees were sent might also allude to this prophetic backdrop.

Recall that the original decree calling for the destruction of the [Jews](gen-jew.html) was sent out on the 13th day of [Nisan](feasts.html) (3:12). Several days later [Haman](esther.html) was hanged and [Esther](esther.html) pleaded from the king to repeal this decree (8:3‑6). Achashverosh agreed, HOWEVER, the actual [letters](letters.html) were not sent out until the 23rd of [Sivan](feasts.html) - some [TWO](two.html) MONTHS later (8:9)! What took so long?

By carefully comparing these [two](two.html) dates, we again find an amazing reminder of Yirmiyahu's prophecy of the [SEVENTY](seventy.html) years. Between the 13th of [Nisan](feasts.html) until the 23rd of [Sivan](feasts.html) - 70 DAYS elapsed (17+30+23). During these [seventy](seventy.html) days, all of the [Jews](gen-jew.html) throughout the Persian empire were under the tremendous peril of impending destruction, thinking that their doom was inevitable. Could this be an ironic reminder to the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people that they had not heeded Yirmiyahu's prophecy of what he expected from Bnei Yisrael once the [seventy](seventy.html) years had expired (see 29:10-14!)?

A similar concept of suffering for a [sin](sin.html), a day for a year (and vice versa), is found twice in Tanach in related circumstances. After the [sin](sin.html) of the "meraglim", the [forty](forty.html) days are replaced by the punishment of [forty](forty.html) years of wandering. Here, too, the [nation](nations.html) opted not to fulfill their divine destiny, preferring a return to Egypt to the conquest of Eretz Yisrael. Yechezkel, too, is required to suffer 'a day for each year.'

[For 390 days followed by an additional 40 days, he must lie on his side and repent for the [sins](sin.html) of Israel and Yehuda that led to the destruction of [Yerushalayim](city.html). (Yechezkel 4:1‑14!)]

A similar claim is made by the [Midrash](orallaw.html) which suggests that Achashverosh threw his 180 day party in celebration of the fact that Yirmiyahu's [seventy](seventy.html) years were over and the Bet Ha‑[Mikdash](mikdash.html) was NOT rebuilt. In [pshat](remez.html), this explanation is unreasonable. Why should the most powerful king of civilization worry about the prophecies of Yirmiyahu, while the [Jews](gen-jew.html) themselves do not listen to him? However, on the level of "[drash](remez.html)", this explanation is enlightening. Chazal, in the spirit of the Megilla ‑ "ve‑nahafokh hu" - put into Achashverosh's mind what should have been in the mind of Am Yisrael, i.e. the fulfillment of Yirmiyahu's prophecy of [seventy](seventy.html) years and the [desire](needs.html) to return.

## The Megilla and Zecharya

If we follow the opinion of the 'historians' in regard to the [time](time.html) period of Megillat [Esther](esther.html), then the prophecies of Zecharya concerning the potential of Bayit [Sheni](sheni.html) precede the story in the Megilla. If so, then we posit that numerous textual parallels between the Megilla and Sefer Zecharya are intentional. In other words, when "anshe kneset ha'gedola" wrote Megillat [Esther](esther.html) (most likely during the [time](time.html) period of Ezra/ see Baba Batra 15a), they assumed that anyone reading the Megilla was familiar with Sefer Zecharya, and hence would understand the implicit meaning of these parallels.

We will now show how the Megilla may suggest that Am Yisrael's predicament during the [time](time.html) period of Achashverosh was caused because Zecharya's prophecies (a [generation](toldot.html) earlier) were not taken seriously! To appreciate this message, we must [study](study.html) Zecharya chapters 7 >8.

For a background, review the [first](one.html) [six](six.html) chapters of Sefer Zecharya, noting how they focus on [one](one.html) primary theme the return of the SHCHINA to [Yerushalayim](city.html). However, Zecharya warns numerous times that the SHCHINA's return will be a function of Am Yisrael's [covenantal](covenant.html) commitment (see 6:15). [Redemption](redemption.html) is indeed possible, however Zecharya insists that the '[spiritual](physical.html)' return of Am Yisrael was no less important than their [physical](physical.html) return:

"shuvu eilai.. ve ashuva aleikhem" (1:3, see also 8:7-8).

[It is recommended that you read the [first](one.html) [two](two.html) chapters of Zecharya (note "hadasim" and "ish rochev al sus" in chapter 1, and "prazot teshev yerushalaim" in chapter 2) and then chapters 7 >8.]

According to Chagai 2:18, construction of the [Temple](temple.html) began on this same year, i.e. the second year of Daryavesh. Zecharya chapter [seven](seven.html) opens [two](two.html) years later when an official delegation from [Bavel](bavel.html) arrives in [Jerusalem](city.html) to ask Zecharya a very fundamental question:

"Ha evkeh be chodesh ha chamishi?" Should we continue to fast in the 5th month (i.e. the fast of Tisha b'[Av](tishabav.html))? (see 7:3)

The question appears to be quite [legitimate](legitimate.html). After all, now that the [Temple](temple.html) is rebuilt, there no longer appears to be a need to fast. However, Zecharya's lengthy and official reply (7:4 8:23) to this question contains an eternal message that relates to the very nature of the ideal [redemption](redemption.html) process.

In Zecharya 7:4 7, God appears to be quite disturbed by the people's question regarding the need to fast. Instead of showing their interest in the greater picture of the [redemption](redemption.html) process, the people seem only to be interested in whether or not they have to fast. In the [eyes](body.html) of the prophet, their question reflected a general attitude problem in regard to the entire [redemption](redemption.html) process.

God's answer implies that the fast of Tisha B'[av](tishabav.html) is not a divine [commandment](cmds613.html) - rather it was a "minhag" instituted by Chazal to remember not only the [Temple](temple.html)'s destruction, but also the reason WHY the churban took place (see 7:5-6). Thus, God explains, feasting or fasting is man's decision, while God is interested in something much more basic - that Bnei Yisrael keep the [mitzvot](cmds613.html) that they had neglected during the [first](one.html) [Temple](temple.html) period (see 7:5-14).

Zecharya continues his answer with [two](two.html) chapters of 'musar' (rebuke) in which he emphasizes the most basic [mitzvot](cmds613.html) which Bnei Yisrael must keep in order for the SHCHINA to return:

"EMET u mishpat SHALOM shiftu be sha'areikhem, ve chesed ve rachamim asu ISH et ACHIV. Almana, ve yatom ve ANI al ta'ashoku..." (7:8 10)

 - Truth, social justice, helping the poor and needy, and thinking kindly of [one](one.html)'s neighbor, etc.

God is anxious for His SHCHINA to return, but in order for that to happen, [Yerushalayim](city.html) must [first](one.html) become a [city](city.html) characterized by truth (8:1 3). God foresees the return the [exiles](galuyot.html) from lands in the [east](east.html) and west. With their return, God and His [nation](nations.html) will become once again [covenantal](covenant.html) partners, through "EMET & TZDAKA" (see 8:7 8).

Finally, after many words of encouragement and repeated 'musar' (see 8:11 17), God finally answers the original question concerning the fast days. Should Am Yisrael return to Israel and keep "EMET ve SHALOM, the [four](four.html) fast days commemorating the destruction of [Yerushalayim](city.html) will become holidays:

"TZOM ha'.... [The [FOUR](four.html) FAST DAYS] will be instead for Yehuda days of celebration... [on the condition that] they will love EMET & SHALOM" (see 8:18 19/ note parallel to Megilla 9:30-31!)

After [two](two.html) chapters of rebuke, Zecharya finally answers the people's original question. Should Bnei Yisrael indeed show their devotion to God, i.e. if they practice "EMET u mishpat SHALOM", then the fast days, the days of [crying](mashal.html) for [Jerusalem](city.html), will become HOLIDAYS instead.

Should Bnei Yisrael indeed love keeping EMET & SHALOM (these [two](two.html) words simply summarize the primary points raised by Zecharya in this perek), then the [redemption](redemption.html) process will be complete.

Zecharya concludes this prophecy with his vision of numerous people from many great [nations](nations.html) will [one](one.html) day come to [Yerushalayim](city.html) in search of God. They will [gather](gather.html) around the "ISH YEHUDI", asking for his guidance, for they will have heard that God is with His people. (8:20 23)

Had Am Yisrael heeded this prophetic call in the [time](time.html) of Koresh and Daryavesh, then they would not have been scattered among 127 provinces during the [time](time.html) of Achashverosh. [One](one.html) could suggest that instead of celebrating with the Persians at the party in Shushan, the [Jews](gen-jew.html) could (& should) have been celebrating with God at His Bet Ha'[Mikdash](mikdash.html) in [Yerushalayim](city.html). The ISH YEHUDI would have been in the BIRA in [Yerushalayim](city.html), making God's [Name](name.html) [known](daat.html) to other [nations](nations.html); instead, the Megilla opens as an ISH YEHUDI is found in the BIRA of Achashverosh in SHUSHAN, ironically carrying the [name](name.html) of foreign god.

[[One](one.html) could also suggest that the Mordechai's institution of the yearly celebration of [Purim](Purim.html) relates specifically to this prophecy. [First](one.html) of all, note how this day is described as [one](one.html) that turns around from "yagon" to "simcha", from "[MOURNING](mourning.html) to [HOLIDAY](festival.html)" (see [Esther](esther.html) 9:22). [Purim](Purim.html) may symbolize the manner in which the fast days for [Jerusalem](city.html) will [one](one.html) day become holidays.]

This parallel to Zecharya could explain the reason for the special [mitzvot](cmds613.html) that Mordechi instituted for [Purim](Purim.html) in his [first](one.html) [letter](letters.html) (see 9:20-22). They reflect Zecharya's repeated message of helping the needy (matanot le evyonim/ note 7:10) and thinking nicely of [one](one.html)'s neighbors (mishloach manot ISH LE RE'EIHU / note 8:16-17!). Once a year we must remind ourselves of the most basic [mitzvot](cmds613.html) that we must keep IN ORDER that we become WORTHY of returning to [Yerushalayim](city.html) and rebuilding the Bet ha'[Mikdash](mikdash.html).

Certain halachot instituted by Chazal may reflect this message. Interestingly, Shushan [Purim](Purim.html) is REPLACED with [Yerushalayim](city.html) [Purim](Purim.html) for the walled cities from the [time](time.html) of Yehoshua bin Nun replace the walled [city](city.html) of SHUSHAN! [see Yehoshua 21:42 and its context, compare to [Esther](esther.html) 9:2]

Although this explanation for certain minhagim of [Purim](Purim.html) may seem a bit 'stretched', textual proof is found in the closing psukim of the Megilla (9:29 32 / read it carefully!).

Mordechai and [Esther](esther.html) need to send out a second "igeret" ([letter](letters.html)) explaining and giving [authority](authority.html) ("tokef") to the minhagim of [Purim](Purim.html) explained in the [first](one.html) "igeret". What was the content of this special second [letter](letters.html)? To our surprise, [one](one.html) short phrase:

"Divrei SHALOM ve EMET"! [See 9:30, read carefully.]

These [two](two.html) key words point us directly back to Zecharya's prophecy about the fast days becoming holidays (read Zecharya 8:18-19 again)! They explain not only WHEN, but also WHY the fast days will become holidays - i.e. if Bnei Yisrael keep SHALOM and EMET! The second 'igeret' may simply be an explanation of the purpose of the minhagim of [Purim](Purim.html) Mordechai and [Esther](esther.html) use this [letter](letters.html) to explain to Am Yisrael WHY [Purim](Purim.html) has been established - a yearly reminder of the prophecies of Zecharya which remain unfulfilled.

The continuation of this "igeret" strengthens this interpretation. Under what [authority](authority.html) ("tokef") does Mordechai institute these halachot?

"ka'asher kiymu al nafsham divrei ha TZOMOT ve za'akatam" (9:31) [Compare these psukim carefully to Zecharya 8:18 19.]

Recall, God had told Zecharya that fast days and feast days are up to man to decide. Now, according to the second "igeret", just like ("ka'asher") the prophets instituted [four](four.html) fast days in order that we remember [Yerushalayim](city.html), Mordechai institutes a 'FEAST DAY' to remember [Yerushalayim](city.html).

[Note that this pasuk cannot be referring to our Taanit [Esther](esther.html), for if it refers to the [three](three.html) day fast, that fast was a [one](one.html) [time](time.html) [event](feasts.html) and was not "al nafsham v'al zaram". Likewise, it cannot be the fast of the 13th of [Adar](feasts.html), as that custom only began during the [time](time.html) period of the Geonim. Therefore, it must refer to the [four](four.html) fast days on [Jerusalem](city.html).]

So why didn't everyone return immediately afterward to Israel?

Most probably, after the [events](feasts.html) of the Megilla, a mass return to [Yerushalayim](city.html) was not realistic. Nonetheless, Mordechai wanted to institute a [holiday](festival.html) which would remind Am Yisrael that should such an opportunity once again, that they will [know](daat.html) how to relate to it properly. Sefer Zecharya and its theme of "shalom v'emet" serve as the [spiritual](physical.html) guide.

[This interpretation may help explain why the celebration of [Purim](Purim.html) will remain even after our final [redemption](redemption.html).]

## Timing

[***Esther***](esther.html) ***6:1*** *On that night could not the king* [*sleep*](mashal.html)*, and he commanded to bring the book of records of the chronicles; and they were read before the king.*

[*Galut*](galuyot.html) (the state of [exile](galuyot.html) and [spiritual](physical.html) displacement in which we find ourselves following the destruction of the Holy [Temple](temple.html)) is referred to as “night”, a [time](time.html) of [spiritual](physical.html) darkness. It is also a [time](time.html) when the [world](worlds.html) is in a state of “[asleep](mashal.html)“.

Thus, [*galut*](galuyot.html) can be described as a [time](time.html) when [HaShem](hashem.html) is “[asleep](mashal.html).” “As the soul fills the [body](body.html),” say our sages, “so [HaShem](hashem.html) fills the [world](worlds.html),” and [*galut*](galuyot.html) is a [time](time.html) when the flow of divine energy into our [world](worlds.html) seems diminished and distorted. [HaShem](hashem.html) seems remote and disaffected; the righteous suffer while the [wicked](wicked.html) prosper. The deeper purpose of [galut](galuyot.html) cannot be discerned through the veil of the divine slumber.

This is the state of affairs that prevails in the [first](one.html) [five](five.html) chapters of the Megillah. But on “that night” the [sleep](mashal.html) of the King of the universe was disturbed. The soul of the soul began to waken, and then [HaShem](hashem.html)’s providence over his [nation](nations.html) began to manifest itself.

(The Chassidic Masters)

“On that night, the king’s [sleep](mashal.html) was disturbed” ([Esther](esther.html) 6:1). The [Midrash](orallaw.html) comments that this refers to [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [sleep](mashal.html):

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah -*** [***Esther***](esther.html) ***X:1*** *ON THAT NIGHT COULD NOT THE KING* [*SLEEP*](mashal.html) *[lit. THE* [*SLEEP*](mashal.html) *OF THE KING WAS SHAKEN] (VI, X): the* [*heavens*](heaven.html)*, the throne of the Supreme King of kings, the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, were shaken when He saw Israel in such distress.’ Is God then subject to* [*sleep*](mashal.html)*? Is it not said, Behold, He that keepeth Israel doth neither slumber nor* [*sleep*](mashal.html) *(Ps. CXXI, 4)? It can happen, however, when Israel are in distress and the other* [*nations*](nations.html) *are at ease; therefore it says, Awake, why sleepest Thou, O Lord? (ibid. XLIV, 24). King Achashverosh’s* [*sleep*](mashal.html) *was also disturbed, because he saw in a* [*dream*](dreams.html)[*Haman*](esther.html) *seizing a sword to kill him, and he awoke in terror from his* [*sleep*](mashal.html) *and told his scribes to bring the book of the chronicles to see what* [*events*](feasts.html) *had occurred, and they opened the book and found how Mordecai had informed against Bigthan and Teresh. So when they said to the king, BEHOLD,* [*HAMAN*](esther.html) *STANDETH IN THE COURT (VI, 5), the king said: ‘What I saw in my* [*dream*](dreams.html) *is true; this fellow has only come at this* [*time*](time.html) *of day to kill me.’*

Realizing the danger that faced them, the [Jews](gen-jew.html) did Teshuva and they turned to [HaShem](hashem.html) in fervent [prayer](prayer.html) and fasting. They aroused themselves from their slumber, and in return [HaShem](hashem.html) aroused Himself from His slumber, so to [speak](mashal.html):

***Tehillim (***[***Psalm***](psalms1.html)***) 78:65*** *Then the Lord awaked as* [*one*](one.html) *out of* [*sleep*](mashal.html)*, [and] like a mighty man that shouts by reason of wine.*

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah -*** [***Esther***](esther.html) ***VII:12*** *AND* [*HAMAN*](esther.html) *SAID UNTO KING AHASUERUS: THERE IS (YESHNO) A CERTAIN [lit.* [*ONE*](one.html)*’] PEOPLE (III, 8). He of whom it is said, The Lord is* [*one*](one.html) *(Deut. VI, 4) is* [*asleep*](mashal.html) *(yashen) to His people. Said the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, to him: ‘There is no* [*sleep*](mashal.html) *for Me, as it says, Behold, He that keepeth Israel doth neither slumber nor* [*sleep*](mashal.html) *(Ps. CXXI, 4), and you say that* [*sleep*](mashal.html) *does affect Me! As you live, I will awake from [the semblance of]* [*sleep*](mashal.html) *against you and destroy you from the* [*world*](worlds.html)*’; and so it is written, Then the Lord awaked as* [*one*](one.html)[*asleep*](mashal.html)*... and He smote His adversaries*

When the Bnei Israel repented with a complete Teshuva and they took upon themselves to fulfill the Torah as if they were accepting it for the [first](one.html) [time](time.html), Then [HaShem](hashem.html) renewed His love as at [first](one.html).

[**Purim**](Purim.html) **is the last of the miracles to occur during the night of** [**Galut**](galuyot.html)**.**

\* \* \*

The king’s party (Vashti’s farewell bash) took place in the [third](three.html) year of his reign. [Three](three.html) years after king Achashverosh put an end to rebuilding the [Temple](temple.html).

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah -*** [***Esther***](esther.html) ***I:15*** *IN THE* [*THIRD*](three.html) *YEAR OF HIS REIGN, HE MADE A FEAST (I, 3). R. Judah and R. Nehemiah gave different explanations. R. Judah said: It means, in the* [*third*](three.html) *year of the making of the throne. When he finished making the throne, HE MADE A FEAST UNTO ALL HIS PRINCES AND HIS SERVANTS. R. Nehemiah said: In the* [*third*](three.html) *year after he stopped the building of the* [*Temple*](temple.html)*. When* [*three*](three.html) *years had passed after he stopped the building of the* [*Temple*](temple.html)*, HE MADE A FEAST UNTO ALL HIS*

[Esther](esther.html) was finally chosen in the [seventh](seven.html) year of Achashverosh’s reign. In other words, the selection of a queen took [four](four.html) years. [Seven](seven.html) years after Queen [Esther](esther.html) is elevated to the position as queen, [Haman](esther.html) promulgates his terrible decree.

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah -*** [***Esther***](esther.html) ***I:15*** *PRINCES AND HIS SERVANTS. R. Samuel b. Imi said: There were* [*four*](four.html) *good points in Achashverosh. He allowed* [*three*](three.html) *years to elapse before he assumed the crown or ascended the throne, he waited* [*four*](four.html) *years before he found a suitable wife, and he did nothing without taking counsel. R. Phinehas said: Moreover, if anyone did him a good turn, he recorded it in writing; and so it says, And it was found written that Mordecai had told, etc. (Est. VI, 2).*

[Haman](esther.html) had the [letters](letters.html) (allowing the anti-Semites to kill the [Jews](gen-jew.html)) sent out on Nissan 13 in the [twelfth](twelve.html) year of the king’s reign. In other words, [Esther](esther.html) has been queen for a bit more than [four](four.html) years by this [time](time.html), and her identity was still a total [secret](sod.html).

[Two](two.html) years after the [Purim](Purim.html) victory, Darius the Persian, son of Queen [Esther](esther.html) and Achashverosh, gives the decree that allows the Bnei Israel to return to [Eretz Israel](city.html) and begin the difficult task of rebuilding the [Beit HaMikdash](mikdash.html).

This suggests that the battle depicted in Megillat [Esther](esther.html) is a picture of the battle of Gog and Magog, the battle of Har Magido (Armageddon). This battle takes place after [seven](seven.html) millenniums have passed. This also suggests that there is [time](time.html) after the end of the [seventh](seven.html) [millennium](millenium.html).

***70 DAYS / 70 YEARS[[28]](#footnote-28)***

Another seemingly unimportant detail, in the Megillah, concerning WHEN the [two](two.html) decrees were sent might also allude to this prophetic backdrop.

Recall that the original decree calling for the destruction of the [Jews](gen-jew.html) was sent out on the 13th day of [Nisan](feasts.html) (3:12). Several days later [Haman](esther.html) was hanged and [Esther](esther.html) pleaded from the king to repeal this decree (8:3‑6). Achashverosh agreed, HOWEVER, the actual [letters](letters.html) were not sent out until the 23rd of [Sivan](feasts.html), some [TWO](two.html) MONTHS later (8:9)! What took so long?

By carefully comparing these [two](two.html) dates, we again find an amazing reminder of Yirmeyahu’s prophecy of the [SEVENTY](seventy.html) years. Between the 13th of [Nisan](feasts.html) until the 23rd of [Sivan](feasts.html), 70 DAYS elapsed (17+30+23). During these [seventy](seventy.html) days, all of the [Jews](gen-jew.html) throughout the Persian empire were under the tremendous peril of impending destruction, thinking that their doom was inevitable. Could this be an ironic reminder to the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people that they had not heeded Yirmeyahu’s prophecy of what he expected from Bnei Yisrael once the [seventy](seventy.html) years had expired (see 29:10-14!)?

A similar concept of suffering for a [sin](sin.html), a day for a year (and vice versa), is found twice in Tanakh in related circumstances. After the [sin](sin.html) of the “spies”, the [forty](forty.html) days are replaced by the punishment of [forty](forty.html) years of wandering. Here, too, the [nation](nations.html) opted not to fulfill their divine destiny, preferring a return to Egypt to the conquest of Eretz Yisrael. Yechezkel, too, is required to suffer ‘a day for each year.’ [For 390 days followed by an additional [forty](forty.html) days, he must lie on his side and repent for the [sins](sin.html) of Israel and Yehuda that led to the destruction of [Yerushalayim](city.html). (Yechezkel 4:1‑14!)]

A similar claim is made by the [Midrash](orallaw.html) which suggests that Achashverosh threw his 180 day party in celebration of the fact that Yirmeyahu’s [seventy](seventy.html) years were over and the [Bet HaMikdash](mikdash.html) was NOT rebuilt. In [pshat](remez.html), this explanation is unreasonable. Why should the most powerful king of civilization worry about the prophecies of Yirmeyahu, while the [Jews](gen-jew.html) themselves do not listen to him? However, on the level of [Drash](remez.html), this explanation is enlightening. Chazal, in the spirit of the Megillah, put into Achashverosh’s mind what should have been in the mind of Am Yisrael, i.e. the fulfillment of Yirmeyahu’s prophecy of [seventy](seventy.html) years and the [desire](needs.html) to return.

The [events](feasts.html) of the Megillah also appear to have catalyzed a major aliyah movement. According to Chazal, Ezra’s aliyah from [Bavel](bavel.html) took place only a few years afterward, during the [seventh](seven.html) year of his reign of Darius (whom Chazal identify with Artachshastah see Ezra 7:1-9).

Thus, according to [Seder](haggada.html) Olam’s opinion, the [events](feasts.html) of the Megillah INDEED had a major effect on the rebuilding of the [Temple](temple.html) and “shivat tzion” - the return to Zion.

\* \* \*

(Note that the phrase to be called out while leading this honoree: **Kakhah ye’Aseh la’Ish Asher...** shows up in [one](one.html) other place in Tanakh. This is the beginning of the formula of Halitza - the refusal of Levirate [marriage](mashal.html), which accompanies the woman’s disdainful spit. [Devarim 25:9] Draw your own conclusions about the satiric effect accomplished by the Baal HaMegillah).

## Cast of Characters

(In order of their appearance)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **CHARACTER** | **ROLE** |
| Achashverosh as “The King” | [HaShem](hashem.html) |
| Achashverosh as “King Achashverosh” | False or anti-god. |
| The [Seven](seven.html) Chamberlains([Seven](seven.html) [Angels](angels.html) of Confusion) |
| Mehuman | Confusion |
| Biztha | Destruction of the House |
| Harbona | Annihilation |
| Bigtha | Pressers of the Winepress |
| Abagtha | Pressers of the Winepress |
| Zethar | Observer of Immorality |
| Carcas | Knocker |
| **The** [**Seven**](seven.html) **princes of Persia and Media** |
| Carshena |  |
| Shethar |  |
| Admatha |  |
| Tarshish |  |
| Meres |  |
| Marsena |  |
| Memuchan | Another [name](name.html) for [Haman](esther.html). |
|  |
| Queen Vashti | Anti-[Mashiach](mashiach.html), an arrogant and disobedient Israel. |
| Mordechai | The Benjamite King who precedes the Davidic King. |
| Queen [Esther](esther.html) (Hadassah) | [Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben [Yosef](joseph.html), The Redeemer. (Venus, the morning-[star](mazaroth.html)) |
| Hegai– Keeper of the women. | Eliyahu the Prophet |
| Shaashgaz **–** The King’s chamberlain.The keeper of the concubines. |  |
| Bigthan– The King’s chamberlain and door keeper |  |
| Teresh– The King’s chamberlain and door keeper |  |
| [Haman](esther.html)  | [Amalekite](amalek.html), descendant of [Esau](edom.html), these people represent evil in the [world](worlds.html). As the Accuser, HaSatan, he represents the evil inclination in all of us. |
| Hatach - The king’s chamberlain | The Prophet Daniel. |
| Zeresh | [Haman](esther.html)’s wife. |
| The [Ten](ten.html) Sons of [Haman](esther.html) |
| Parshandatha |  |
| Dalphon |  |
| Aspatha |  |
| Poratha |  |
| Adalia |  |
| Aridatha |  |
| Parmashta |  |
| Arisai |  |
| Aridai |  |
| Vajezatha |  |
|  |  |
| Darius the Persian | [Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben David |

## Connections

There are many close comparisons between [Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben [Yosef](joseph.html) and [Esther](esther.html), as the following chart details:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| [**ESTHER**](esther.html) | **[MASHIACH](mashiach.html)** |
| Forced to live a life of secrecy, unable to reveal who she really was. | Forced to live a life of secrecy ([Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben [Yosef](joseph.html)), unable to reveal who He really was ([Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben David). |
| [***Esther***](esther.html) ***2:15*** *And* [*Esther*](esther.html) *obtained favour in the sight of all them that looked upon her.* | ***Luqas (***[***Luke***](luke.html)***) 2:52*** *And* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.* |
| [**Midrash**](orallaw.html) **Rabbah - Genesis LVI:1** Now it came to pass on the [third](three.html) day, that [Esther](esther.html) put on her royal apparel ([Esther](esther.html) 5:1)-i.e. she put on the royal apparel of her ancestor. For whose sake? The Rabbis say: For the sake of the [third](three.html) day, when Revelation took place. | ***Matityahu (Matthew) 16:21*** *From that* [*time*](time.html) *forth began* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto* [*Jerusalem*](city.html)*, and suffer many things of the elders and chief* [*priests*](priests.html) *and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the* [*third*](three.html) *day.* |
| [Esther](esther.html) petitioned for the [redemption](redemption.html) of the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people on [Passover](passover.html), the anniversary of the [redemption](redemption.html) [from Egypt](thebirth.html). | [Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben [Yosef](joseph.html) began His petition for [redemption](redemption.html) on [Passover](passover.html), the anniversary of the [events](feasts.html) in [Esther](esther.html)’s day, and the anniversary of the days of [redemption](redemption.html) [from Egypt](thebirth.html). |
| Queen [Esther](esther.html) enters Achashverosh’s palace gingerly to petition for the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people. | [Mashiach](mashiach.html), The [High Priest](priests.html), gingerly and reverently enters into the Kodesh HaKadashim, the Holy of Holies, to atone for the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people. |
| Achashverosh’s house had an outer court and an inner court, just like [HaShem](hashem.html)’s house:[***Esther***](esther.html) ***5:1*** *Now it came to pass on the* [*third*](three.html) *day, that* [*Esther*](esther.html) *put on [her] royal [apparel], and stood in the inner court of the king’s house, over against the king’s house: and the king sat upon his royal throne in the royal house, over against the gate of the house.* | [HaShem](hashem.html)’s house (The [Temple](temple.html)) had an outer court (Holy Place) and an inner court (Holy of Holies):***Vayikra (Leviticus) 16:2*** *And* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *said unto Moses,* [*Speak*](mashal.html) *unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy [place] within the veil before the mercy seat, which [is] upon the* [*ark*](ark.html)*; that he die not: for I will appear in the* [*cloud*](important.html) *upon the mercy seat.*[***Bereans***](bereans.html) ***(***[***Hebrews***](bereans.html)***) 10:19-21*** *Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the* [*blood*](body.html) *of* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html)*, By a* [*new*](new.html) *and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And [having] an* [*high priest*](priests.html) *over the* [*house of God*](housegod.html)*;* |
| In the [Talmud](orallaw.html), [Esther](esther.html) is compared to the Ayelet Hashachar, the [first](one.html) ray of light in the morning (Yoma 29a). The [psalm](psalms1.html) of Ayelet Hashachar, [Psalm](psalms1.html) 22, is dedicated to her:***Tehillim (***[***Psalm***](psalms1.html)***) 22:2-4*** *“My Lord, my Lord, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me despite my cries? Oh my G-d I* [*cry*](mashal.html) *in the daytime but you do not respond, and in the night I have no rest. But you are Holy, enthroned by the praises of Israel”* The [Midrash](orallaw.html) expands on this idea:“My Lord, my Lord, why have you forsaken me?” My Lord at the [splitting of] the sea, my Lord at [Sinai](stages.html), why have you forsaken me? Why has the order of the [world](worlds.html) changed concerning me? The order of the mothers? With regard to our mother Sarah, she was held captive by Pharaoh [one](one.html) night and he and his whole [household](househld.html) were struck with a [plague](plagues.html)... but I have been placed in the bosom of this [wicked](wicked.html) man all these years, for me you do no miracles. “My Lord, my Lord, why have you forsaken me?” ([Midrash](orallaw.html) Tehillim Buber, 22:16)Chazal, in Megillah 15b, tell us that when Queen [Esther](esther.html) was to confront King Achashverosh, she cried, “My God, my God, why have You abandoned me?” To this day, the designated [**Psalm**](psalms1.html) **of** [**Purim**](Purim.html) (according to the Vilna Gaon) is the [one](one.html) in which this outcry appears; and, as our Sages explain, the [Psalm](psalms1.html) refers to the darkest hour of the night.  | ***Matityahu (Matthew) 27:46*** *And about the* [*ninth*](nine.html) *hour* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *cried with a loud* [*voice*](voice.html)*, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* ***Marqos (Mark) 15:34*** *And at the* [*ninth*](nine.html) *hour* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *cried with a loud* [*voice*](voice.html)*, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*  |
| [Esther](esther.html) [gathered](gather.html) together all the [Jews](gen-jew.html):… which is not according to the custom. R. Abba said: [She said], It will not be according to the custom of every other day. Till now [I have associated with Achashverosh] under compulsion, but now I will do so of my own will. And if I perish, I perish. As I am lost to my father’s house so I shall be lost to thee. (Megillah 15a) | [Mashiach](mashiach.html) [gathered](gather.html) all the [Jews](gen-jew.html):[***Ephesians***](ephesians.html) ***1:10*** *That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might* [*gather*](gather.html) *together in* [*one*](one.html) *all things in* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*, both which are in* [*heaven*](heaven.html)*, and which are on earth; [even] in him:* |
| [Esther](esther.html) hesitates to fulfill Mordechai’s request to go in to Achashverosh as the existence of the entire [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people hangs in the balance. She must go in to Achashverosh.  | [Mashiach](mashiach.html) hesitates as the existence of the entire [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people hangs in the balance. He must go to the cross.***Marqos (Mark) 14:36*** *And he said, Abba, Father, all things [are] possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt.* |
| Imagine the heroism of [Esther](esther.html): she would prepare for the systematic rape perpetrated on her [body](body.html) by going to [mikveh](forty.html). Her [body](body.html) was taken but her soul was intact and pure. Now she makes the decision that she must blemish that soul for the sake of [HaShem](hashem.html) and her people.  | Imagine the heroism of [Mashiach](mashiach.html): He would prepare for the systematic destruction of his [body](body.html) by going to the garden. His [body](body.html) was destroyed but his soul was intact and pure. Now He makes the decision that He must blemish that soul for the sake of [HaShem](hashem.html) and his people.  |
| [Esther](esther.html) entered the inner chamber of The King with her finest clothing. | [Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben [Yosef](joseph.html) is shown in the Holy of Holies, the inner chamber, with very fine clothing as well:***Revelation 1:13*** *And in the midst of the* [*seven*](seven.html) *candlesticks [*[*one*](one.html)*] like unto the Son of man, clothed with a* [*garment*](garment.html) *down to the* [*foot*](heel.html)*, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.* |
| [Esther](esther.html), in [exile](galuyot.html), has her wine feast for [two](two.html) days. | [Mashiach](mashiach.html) has His [four](four.html) cup wine feast according to the Sadducees and dies on the [Passover](passover.html) of the Pharisees. Thus He too has kept the feast for [two](two.html) days.***Matityahu (Matthew) 26:27*** *And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave [it] to them, saying, Drink ye all of it;* |
| Chazal tell us that [third](three.html) day of [Esther](esther.html)’s fast was the 15th of [Nisan](feasts.html), the night of the [Passover](passover.html) [Seder](haggada.html) (Rashi 5:1). Because of the desperate situation, the [seder](haggada.html) could be forfeited. Still, [Esther](esther.html) kept as much as she could and served [matza](chametz.html) at the banquets. Additionally, the banquets are called a wine feast (5:6, 7:2, 7:7), alluding to the [four](four.html) cups of wine that were drunk at the [seder](haggada.html).  | ***Luqas (***[***Luke***](luke.html)***) 22:15*** *And he said unto them, With* [*desire*](needs.html) *I have desired to* [*eat*](eating.html) *this* [*Passover*](passover.html) *with you before I suffer:*[His Majesty](yeshua.html) celebrated the Sadducean [Passover](passover.html) but He forfeited the Pharisaic [Passover](passover.html) [seder](haggada.html) because He died just before the [seder](haggada.html) began.  |
| Just as [Esther](esther.html) had spent the whole evening telling the national story (the Haggadah), Achashverosh reviews the story of his kingdom as well. When Achashverosh reviews his “royal book” and, for the [first](one.html) [time](time.html), becomes aware that Mordechai had saved the King’s life (6:2), he determines to reward Mordechai.  | [Mashiach](mashiach.html) also told the story of the Haggadah whilst adding His own pathos. |
| While pleading with [Esther](esther.html), [Haman](esther.html) **accidentally** falls on “the couch upon which [Esther](esther.html) was” (7:8). This is an allusion to the custom to lean during the [seder](haggada.html) rather than sit. | [Mashiach](mashiach.html) reclined at His last [Passover](passover.html):***Luqas (***[***Luke***](luke.html)***) 22:14-15*** *And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the* [*twelve*](twelve.html) *apostles with him. And he said unto them, With* [*desire*](needs.html) *I have desired to* [*eat*](eating.html) *this* [*Passover*](passover.html) *with you before I suffer:* |
| Of Vashti it is said:[**Midrash**](orallaw.html) **Rabbah -** [**Esther**](esther.html) **IV:11** AND THE WORD PLEASED THE KING AND THE PRINCES (I, 21). He gave the order and they brought in her [head](body.html) on a platter. | Of Yochanan the Baptist it is said:***Marqos (Mark) 6:25-28*** *And she came in straightway with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me by and by in a charger the* [*head*](body.html) *of John the Baptist. And the king was exceeding sorry; [yet] for his oath’s sake, and for their sakes, which sat with him, he would not reject her. And immediately the king sent an executioner, and commanded his* [*head*](body.html) *to be brought: and he went and beheaded him in the prison, And brought his* [*head*](body.html) *in a charger, and gave it to the damsel: and the damsel gave it to her mother.* |
| [**Midrash**](orallaw.html) **Rabbah -** [**Esther**](esther.html) **VI:12.** [ESTHER](esther.html) HAD NOT YET MADE [KNOWN](daat.html) HER KINDRED (II. 20). This [teaches](teacher.html) that she put a ban of silence on herself like her ancestress [Rachel](rachel.html) who also put a ban of silence on herself. All the greatest of her descendants forced themselves to be silent. [Rachel](rachel.html) put a ban of silence on herself when she saw her [wedding](wedding.html) presents in the [hand](fourteen.html) of her sister and said nothing. [Benjamin](benyamin.html) her son also forced himself to keep silence. The proof is that his stone in the [high priest](priests.html)’s breastplate was jasper, indicating that he [knew](daat.html) of the sale of [Joseph](joseph.html) but said nothing. Yoshpe (jasper)--as if to say, yesh peh (there is a [mouth](body.html)), and yet he was silent. Saul her descendant--Concerning the matter of the kingdom... he told him not (I Sam. X, 16). [ESTHER](esther.html) HAD NOT YET MADE [KNOWN](daat.html) HER KINDRED NOR HER PEOPLE. | ***Matityahu (Matthew) 26:63*** *But* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *held his peace. And the* [*high priest*](priests.html) *answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*, the Son of God.* |
| [Haman](esther.html) (an [Amalekite](amalek.html) descendant of [Esau](edom.html)) cast lots for the [covenant](covenant.html) people (the [body](body.html) is called a “[garment](garment.html)” for the soul):[***Esther***](esther.html) ***3:7*** *In the* [*first*](one.html) *month, that [is], the month* [*Nisan*](feasts.html)*, in the* [*twelfth*](twelve.html) *year of king Achashverosh, they cast Pur, that [is], the lot, before* [*Haman*](esther.html) *from day to day, and from month to month, [to] the* [*twelfth*](twelve.html) *[month], that [is], the month* [*Adar*](feasts.html)*.* | The Romans ([Esau](edom.html)’s descendants) cast lots for the [covenant](covenant.html) [garment](garment.html) (talit):***Yochanan (John) 19:24*** *They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did.* |
| Rav Tzaddok of Lublin stresses that a person must be willing to “love G-d with all their [heart](body.html) and all their soul”, even if it means giving up [one](one.html)’s soul. This is true love of G-d. How ironic! Had [Esther](esther.html) given her life rather than spend even [one](one.html) night in the palace, she would have been a martyr deserving an exalted share in the [World](futures.html) to Come; now, having given up her [body](body.html), she faces the possibility of her soul being wiped out. | [Mashiach](mashiach.html) was with The Father in an exalted position. However, He “loved [HaShem](hashem.html) with all His [heart](body.html) and all His soul”. Therefore He left his idyllic life and went to a place of torment to bear the [sins](sin.html) of the [world](worlds.html). |
| After consensual contact with Achashverosh, [Esther](esther.html) will no longer have any possibility to remain Mordechai’s wife. The Chassidic writer Rav Tzaddok of Lublin (Takanat Hashavin page 17) sees another aspect of [Esther](esther.html)’s hesitation: If [Esther](esther.html) seduces the King, she will forfeit her share in the [World](futures.html) to Come! Her response to Mordechai’s directions, “As I am lost, I am lost (4:16)”, refers to her halachic situation: Just as she may lose her life in this [world](worlds.html), she risks losing her share in the next [one](one.html). | As [Mashiach](mashiach.html) took on the [sins](sin.html) of the [world](worlds.html), He too, risked His share in The [World](futures.html) to Come:[***Bereans***](bereans.html) ***(***[***Hebrews***](bereans.html)***) 9:28*** *So* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html) *was once offered to bear the* [*sins*](sin.html) *of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second* [*time*](time.html) *without* [*sin*](sin.html) *unto* [*salvation*](salvation.html)*.****II Corinthians 5:20-21*** *Now then we are ambassadors for* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*, as though God did beseech [you] by us: we* [*pray*](prayer.html) *[you] in* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*’s stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him [to be]* [*sin*](sin.html) *for us, who* [*knew*](daat.html) *no* [*sin*](sin.html)*; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.* |

Which descendants of Binyamin “will divide the spoils in the evening” according to Bereshit 49:27? (The evening hints to the [Galut](galuyot.html), the [exile](galuyot.html).)

**Mordechai and** [**Esther**](esther.html)**.**

\* \* \*

We find. In [Shabbat](sabbath.html) 88a, that the [first](one.html) [time](time.html) in history that the Torah was actually fulfilled (almost 1,000 years after it was given on Mount [Sinai](stages.html)) by the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people was…. At that [first](one.html) [Purim](Purim.html). Therefore [Purim](Purim.html) is higher than [Shavuot](shavuot.html) (The [holiday](festival.html) of the giving of the Torah).

## [Yosef](joseph.html) and [Esther](esther.html)[[29]](#footnote-29)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **[YOSEF](joseph.html)** | **[ESTHER](esther.html)** |
|  |  |
| [Yosef](joseph.html) was called “Tzofnat Paneah” - lit. “Uncovering the Hidden” | Megillat [Esther](esther.html) can be explained as “revealing (megillat-gilu) the hidden ([esther](esther.html)-nistar)” |
|  |  |
| **Bereshit 41:34-37** “Let the king appoint officers (*yafked ha-melech pikidim*)” - [Yosef](joseph.html) becomes viceroy | [**Esther**](esther.html) **2:3-4** “Let the king appoint officers (*v’yafked ha-melech pikidim*)” - [Esther](esther.html) becomes queen.(The Baal HaMegillah is showing us how Achashverosh and his servants viewed these young girls - just like wheat to be collected and brought to the palace.) |
|  |  |
| **Bereshit 39:7** states that [Yosef](joseph.html) was “*yefeh to’ar v’yefeh mar’eh*.” | [**Esther**](esther.html) **2:7** states that [Esther](esther.html) was “*yefat to’ar v’yefat mar’eh*” (beautiful in stature and appearance) |
|  |  |
| **Bereshit 37:3-4** states “And Yisrael loved [Yosef](joseph.html) more than all of his brothers ... and [Yosef](joseph.html) found favor in his [eyes](body.html).” | [**Esther**](esther.html) **2:17** states “And the king loved [Esther](esther.html) more than all of the other women and she found favor in his [eyes](body.html) more than the other virgins.” |
|  |  |
| **Megillah 13b** states: “[HaShem](hashem.html) made a master get angry at his servants (Pharaoh at the butler and baker) so as to perform a miracle for a righteous individual (freeing [Yosef](joseph.html) from jail), In both places, the word used for anger is the unique root ‘*katzaf*.’ | **Megillah 13b** states: “[HaShem](hashem.html) made servants get angry at their master (Bigthan and Teresh at Achashverosh) so as to perform a miracle for a righteous individual (Mordechai).” In both places, the word used for anger is the unique root ‘*katzaf*.’ |
|  |  |
| The good done by [Yosef](joseph.html) interpreting the [dreams](dreams.html) is put on the back burner for the [time](time.html) being. We are told “And the butler did not remember (*lo ZACHAR*) [Yosef](joseph.html) and he forgot him,”  | The good done by Mordechai uncovering the plot is put on the back burner for the [time](time.html) being. By Mordechai we are told that “They (his deeds) were written in the book of chronicles (*sefer ha-ZICHRONOT* - see 6:1) before the king.” |
|  |  |
| [Midrash](orallaw.html) Tanhuma points out the phrase “*yom va-yom*” - day by day, is used to describe the constant pleadings of Potiphar’s wife to [Yosef](joseph.html) to lie with her in **Bereshit 39:10**.  | [Midrash](orallaw.html) Tanhuma points out the phrase “*yom va-yom*” - day by day, is used to describe the daily scene whereby the officers of Achashverosh attempted to convince Mordechai to bow to [Haman](esther.html) in [**Esther**](esther.html) **3:4**. |
|  |  |
| “*va-yasar et tabato*” - and he removed his ring, referring to Pharaoh’s granting power to [Yosef](joseph.html) in **Bereshit 41:42**.  | “*va-yasar et tabato*” - and he removed his ring, referring to Achashverosh’s granting power to [Haman](esther.html) in [**Esther**](esther.html) **3:10**. |
|  |  |
| There are scenes in the **Bereshit 37:29** that reflect the anguish of [Yaakov](israelja.html) throughout the story of [Yosef](joseph.html)’s sale and absence.  | [**Esther**](esther.html) **4:1** states “*vayikra Mordechai et bigadav*” - and Mordechai rent his garments. |
|  |  |
| Double expression:[Yaakov](israelja.html)’s speech when Yehuda convinces him that Binyamin must be brought down to Egypt so that the family will not starve -”*v’ka’asher shacholti, shacholti*” - and if I will be left childless, I will be left childless. **Bereshit 43:14** | Double expression:Mordechai prevails upon [Esther](esther.html) to go before the king and petition on behalf of the [Jews](gen-jew.html), [Esther](esther.html) reluctantly agrees, stating “*v’ka’asher avaditi, avaditi*” - and if I will be lost, I will be lost. [**Esther**](esther.html) **4:16**. |
|  |  |
| Pharaoh parades [Yosef](joseph.html) through the streets of Egypt upon appointing him viceroy - “*vayarkeiv oto b’mirkevet ha-mishneh...vayikra lifanav avreich...*” **Bereshit 41:43** | Mordechai is led through the streets of Shushan by a humiliated [Haman](esther.html). The Megillah states “*vayarkiveihu birchov ha-ir...vayikra lifanav kacha ye’aseh la-ish...*” [**Esther**](esther.html) **6:11** |
|  |  |
| [Yosef](joseph.html) rises to power in Egypt. | [Esther](esther.html) rises to power in [Babylon](bavel.html). |
|  |  |
| [Yosef](joseph.html) is a son of [Rachel](rachel.html). | Mordechai is a “son” of [Rachel](rachel.html). |
|  |  |
| [Yosef](joseph.html) comes to power before the [famine](famine.html). | [Esther](esther.html) comes to power before the evil decree. |
|  |  |
| Yehuda pleads for Binyamin. | [Esther](esther.html) pleads for her people. |
|  |  |
| [Yosef](joseph.html) reveals himself to his brothers. | [Esther](esther.html) reveals herself to king Achashverosh. |
|  |  |
| Pharaoh’s [sleep](mashal.html) is disturbed by a [dream](dreams.html). | Achashverosh’s [sleep](mashal.html) is disturbed; which the [Midrash](orallaw.html) attributes to a [dream](dreams.html) that [Haman](esther.html) is going to kill him. |
|  |  |
| [Dreams](dreams.html) are the catalyst. | Parties are the catalyst. |
|  |  |
| [HaShem](hashem.html)’s “[hand](fourteen.html)” is obvious. | [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [hand](fourteen.html) is concealed. |
|  |  |
| [Yosef](joseph.html) was taken from his family and sold into slavery. | [Esther](esther.html) was taken from her family and became the king’s slave. |
|  |  |
| There is no other figure to be found anywhere in Tanakh who mentions G-d as many times as [Yosef](joseph.html) does (19 times) | The [name](name.html) of G-d is not mentioned anywhere in Megillat [Esther](esther.html). |
|  |  |
| [Yosef](joseph.html) talks to his family through an intermediary (Menashe - a translator). | [Esther](esther.html) speaks to her family, Mordechai, through an intermediary (Hatach). |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Yehoshua** | **Mordechai** |
|  |  |
| Descendant of [Rachel](rachel.html):***Shemot 17:9*** *And Moshe said to Yehoshua... go out and fight against* [*Amalek*](amalek.html)*“*  | Descendant of [Rachel](rachel.html). |
|  |  |
| Yehoshua was the [first](one.html) to fight against [Amalek](amalek.html), and [Haman](esther.html) was a descendant of [Amalek](amalek.html). | Shushan [Purim](Purim.html) celebrated in cities that were walled in the days of Yehoshua. |
|  |  |
| Yehoshua uses a silent [prayer](prayer.html) – then raised [hands](fourteen.html) of Moshe. | Mordechai uses a silent [prayer](prayer.html) – fasting. |

## Conclusion

Koresh (Cyrus) had given the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people the [freedom](freedom.html) to return to [Eretz Israel](city.html) and to rebuild the [Beit HaMikdash](mikdash.html). Some [forty](forty.html) thousand of the [six](six.html) million [Jews](gen-jew.html) heeded this call and returned. The rest stayed in [Babylon](bavel.html). They preferred to be like Queen Vashti and dealt contemptuously with The King of Kings and His “house”. This pictures not only the [events](feasts.html) in [Babylon](bavel.html) in the days of queen [Esther](esther.html), but it also pertains to the [end of days](lastdays.html). In the [end of days](lastdays.html), [HaShem](hashem.html) will bring us to our senses with a decree of destruction delivered by our [Amalekite](amalek.html) enemies. These enemies will attempt to completely annihilate the Bnei Israel. When we repent for our Queen Vashti [type](types.html) disobedience to the King of Kings, then [HaShem](hashem.html) will raise us to the level of Queen [Esther](esther.html) in order for us to complete the [tikkun](tikkun.html). Then and only then, can the [Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben David come to our aid. We must [first](one.html) have out Benjamite king to bring us to battle against [Amalek](amalek.html).

The Megillat of [Esther](esther.html) provides a small glimpse into the ultimate [redemption](redemption.html). The cast of characters reflects the story of [redemption](redemption.html) that has had various pieces exposed to the Bnei Israel throughout History. A careful examination of the details reveals many of the details of the ultimate [redemption](redemption.html). Shlomo HaMelech said it best:

***Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) 1:9*** *The thing that hath been, it [is that] which shall be; and that which is done [is] that which shall be done: and [there is] no* [*new*](new.html) *[thing] under the* [*sun*](hachama.html)*.*

The battle is yet in front of us, but our success is assured:

***Yeshayahu 55:13*** *In place of the thorn-bush a cypress will rise, and in place of the nettle, a myrtle...”*

***Megillah 10b*** *“In place of the thorn-bush” - in place of* [*Haman*](esther.html) *“a cypress will rise” - this refers to Mordechai. “In place of the nettle” - in place of Vashti “a myrtle” - this is* [*Esther*](esther.html) *the righteous* [*one*](one.html)*, who is called Hadassah. “And it shall be for* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *for a* [*name*](name.html)*” - this refers to the reading of the Megillah’.*

\* \* \*

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1. Bereshit 3:11 Heb. inv. The first word can be read as Haman, and the second can refer to the tree or gallows upon which Haman was hanged; cf. Esther 7:10. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Devarim 31:18. Heb. rh,xt. The second word is very like the name Esther, r,xt both in spelling and in sound. The verse in general foretells the many evils and troubles that shall befall [Israel](file:///D%3A%5CWord%5CPURIM%5Cgen-jew.html) when they forsake the ways of [HaShem](file:///D%3A%5CWord%5CPURIM%5Chashem.html), and this was the case at the time of Esther, cf. Meg. 12a. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Shemot 30:23. Heb. rurs rn. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The Aramaic translation of Onkelos renders the Hebrew by thfs trhn, which words both in spelling and in sound resemble hfsrn, Mordecai. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. cf. Shir HaShirim 1:5, 1:10, 1:15 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. My teacher, Hakham Dr. Yosef ben Haggai and Rabbi Ari Kahn provided many of the insights and words for this study. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Mekhilta de-Rashbi, 71 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. This allusion was provided by Rabbi Moshe Bogomilsky in “Vidibarta Bam” on Megillat Esther. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Compare this with Megillat [Ruth](file:///D%3A%5CWord%5CPURIM%5Cruth.html) who is also the quintessential convert. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Midrash Rabbah Vayikra 30:12 - Another exposition: “The fruit of the hadar tree” symbolizes Israel; just as the etrog has taste as well as fragrance, so Israel have among them men who possess learning and good deeds. “Branches of palm trees”, too, applies to Israel; as the palm-tree has taste but not fragrance, so Israel have among them such as possess learning but not good deeds. “And boughs of thick trees” (ib.) likewise applies to Israel; just as the myrtle has fragrance but no taste, so Israel have among them such as possess good deeds but not learning. “And willows of the brook” also applies to Israel; just as the willow has no taste and no fragrance, so Israel have among them people who possess neither learning nor good deeds. What then does the Holy One, blessed be He, do to them? To destroy them is impossible. But, says the Holy One, blessed be He, let them all be tied together in one band and they will atone one for another. If you have done so [says God], then at that instant I am exalted. Hence it is written, It is He that buildeth His upper chambers in the heaven (Amos IX, 6). When is He exalted? What time they are made into one band; as it says, When He1 hath founded His band2 upon the earth (ib.). Accordingly Moses exhorts Israel: “And ye shall take you on the first day the fruit,” etc. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. The permissibility of a married woman to use her sexuality to save lives has been debated in halachic sources. See Responsa Shvut Yaakov Volume 2, section 117, Responsa Noda Beyehuda *Tanina Yoreh De'ah* 161, Responsa Binyan Zion 154. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. The first time the word *vatilbash* is used in the Torah is when Rivkah dresses Yaakov in Esav’s garments – as he prepares to enter with the two goats to feed his father. There, the word is pronounced *vatalbesh*. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. The Tikunei Zohar continues, and makes more comparisons between Yom Kippur and elements of the Purim story. The commentary of the *Sulam* understands this entire passage in reference to the exile of the *Shekhina*. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. See Rav Zadok Hakohen of Lublin, *Liqutei Amarim*, section 16 [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. The Talmud and Midrash report that Esther prepared for her liaison by immersing her body in a *mikveh.* See Migilah 13b. Midrash Tihillim Buber 22:16. It is interesting to note that the *Kohen Gadol* prepared himself to enter the Temple and perform the service by immersing himself. See Yoma 30a. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Rabbinic sources maintain the Esther and Mordechai were not only cousins – they were in fact married. This assertion complicates her legal status. See Talmud Megilah 13a
A Tanna taught in the name of R. Meir: Read not "for a daughter?*[le-bat]*, but for a house [*le-bayi*t] (I.e., a wife.). …so here, it means a wife. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Her actions may fall under the rubric of a "Sin for the sake of Heaven". See Talmud Bavli Nazir 23b. Alternatively, the Noda B'Yehuda, op. cit., suggests that, to save all of Israel, and with the blessings of Mordechai's court and with Divine Inspiration –Esther was permitted to act as she did. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. See Rav Zadok Hakohen, Takanat HaShavin section 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. For the identification of the Tree of knowledge with grapes see Zohar Bereshit 73a. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Pri Zadik Vaylech-Shabbat Shuva section 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Rav Yehonatan Eybshitz (*Ya'arot Dvash*, vol. 1, Drush 8) says that Purim is even greater than Yom Kippur, for Yom Kippur only heals the rift between man and God (Mishna Yoma 8:9). Purim, with gifts sent from one to another and gifts to the poor, heals the rift between man and his fellow. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Haman came from [Amalek](file:///D%3A%5CWord%5CPURIM%5Camalek.html). Amalek embodies the Ko’ach ha’Tum’ah of [Esav](file:///D%3A%5CWord%5CPURIM%5Cedom.html), represented by his Malach, the Satan (RASHI Sukah 29a DH Elokeha). [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Chazal associate Agag with Gog. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Based upon a talk by Rav Moshe Weinberger shlita [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. “HaRav Nosson Wachtfogel” zt”l, the late Mashgiach of the Lakewood Yeshiva, suggested this. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. see Divrei Hayamim (Chronicles) 29:1 & 29:19 [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. see Melachim bet (II Kings) 25:27 & Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 39:1. Marduk was a late-generation god from ancient Mesopotamia and patron deity of the city of Babylon. When Babylon became the political center of the Euphrates valley in the time of Hammurabi (18th century BC), he slowly started to rise to the position of the head of the Babylonian pantheon, a position he fully acquired by the second half of the second millennium BC. In the city of Babylon, Marduk was worshiped in the temple Esagila. Marduk is associated with the divine weapon Imhullu. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Menachem Leibtag [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Gabriel Cohen, “Iyunim B’Hamesh Megillot-Megilat Esther” (1981), suggested most of these comparisons and provided the insight for the rest. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)